TENDO KIRIN
天堂きりん
大阪在住。
代表作に『きみがiに積みついた』
（講談社・『Kiss PLUS』にて連載中）
『手のひらサイズ。』（祥伝社）など。
好きなアーティストはSAKEROCKの星野 源。
「そして、晴れになる」は、
「月刊オフィスユー」誌上にて隔月連載中。

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and it will be sunny

そして、晴れになる①
天堂きりん
TENDO KIRIN presents

and it will be sunny
そして、晴れになる①
天堂きりん
集英社

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**晴れの日もあれば、雨の日もある。
だから人生はおもしろい――。**

明るい笑い声が絶えない、女ばかりの家族・時任家。
けれど、家族だからこそ口にできない複雑な想いを、
それぞれが抱えていて…？
注目の漫画家・天堂きりんが描く、
家族をめぐるオムニバスストーリー。

オフィスユーコミックス
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officeYOU COMICS
イラスト：天堂きりん　デザイン：川谷康久

天堂きりんのコミックス
officeYOUコミックス
そして、晴れになる①

and
it will be
sunny

そして、晴れになる①
天堂きりん

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天堂きりん

集英社

officeYOU COMICS

And It Will Be Sunny ①

Tendo Kirin

Office YOU comics

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CHA 1 PTER

I GOT IN...
I...
RUMBLE
OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT
If I had to say one or the other, until that day
RUMBLE
my life was always clear skies.
I HAVE GOOD LUCK AFTER ALL, WAHHHH!

DON'T YOU THINK THAT OUTFIT EXPOSES TOO MUCH?
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE A COLLEGE ADMINISTRATOR,
HANG ON, TOKITOU-SAN.
CAREER CENTER
Employment Search Counseling
Types of Careers Lecture
Graduate School / Study Abroad Counseling
IT'S NOT NORMAL!
EHH~ REALLY? BUT IT'S NORMAL~
CURVY
I did all right advancing to junior college and finding a job.
Honestly
I was getting a little carried away.

WOW~ IT'S SO PRETTY-
THANKS, SHUU!
IT REALLY SUITS YOU, NONKO.
Because I thought
everything would just continue to go well.
HELLO! THANKS FOR ALWAYS TAKING CARE OF NON-CHAN!
I'M HER OLDER SISTER, EIKO!
HELLO, I'M UMEHARA SHUUJI.
Stare
EIKO, WHAT ARE YOU...?
Stare
IT'S JUST AS I THOUGHT!
SHUUJI-SAN IS PRETTY FLASHY~
really really
wa ha ha ha

IT'S JUST LIKE YOUR SISTER SAYS.
I GUESS IT'S TRUE I'M A FLASHY GUY.
WHA-...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, HOW RUDE!
IT'S NOT RUDE 'CAUSE IT'S A COMPLIMENT.
WHAT KIND OF COMPLIMENT IS THAT??
Hahaha
IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE.
YES, PEOPLE OFTEN SAY SO!
THANKS.
EIKO!
LOOK AT THIS.
EVEN HE GETS IT.
YOU'RE AN INTERESTING PERSON, EI-SAN.

I had confidence in myself and my luck.
AHA HA HA HA
So I didn't have any doubts about his feelings that had been swaying.
I'M VERY SORRY!
I CAN'T MARRY YOU, NORIKO!
I FELL IN LOVE WITH EIKO-SAN.
PLEASE GIVE HER TO ME.
TELL ME IT'S A LIE, SHUU...
ARE YOU STUPID! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU THINKING!!
DEAR...

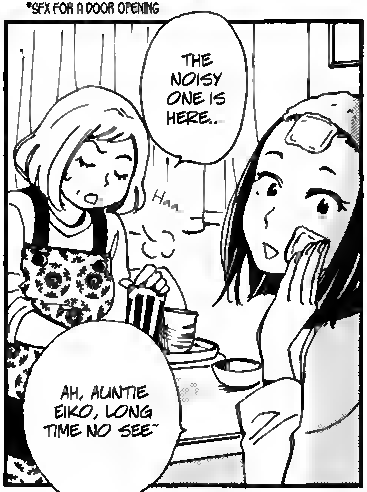
EI-CHAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF ME?
EH...
AH...
I...
STOP IT!!
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU LOVE,
SO PLEASE DON'T THROW ME AWAY
PLEASE!!

I wonder if it was the rashness of youth... I couldn't give up on him.
He must have pitied me.
He chose me.
In the end he didn't choose my sister.
The married life we started in spite of my parents opposition,
we put an end to it after 4 years.
MOTHER...
HOW SHAMEFUL. WHY DID SHE CHOOSE A MAN LIKE THAT
There was no way it could have gone well.
NON-CHAN YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL.

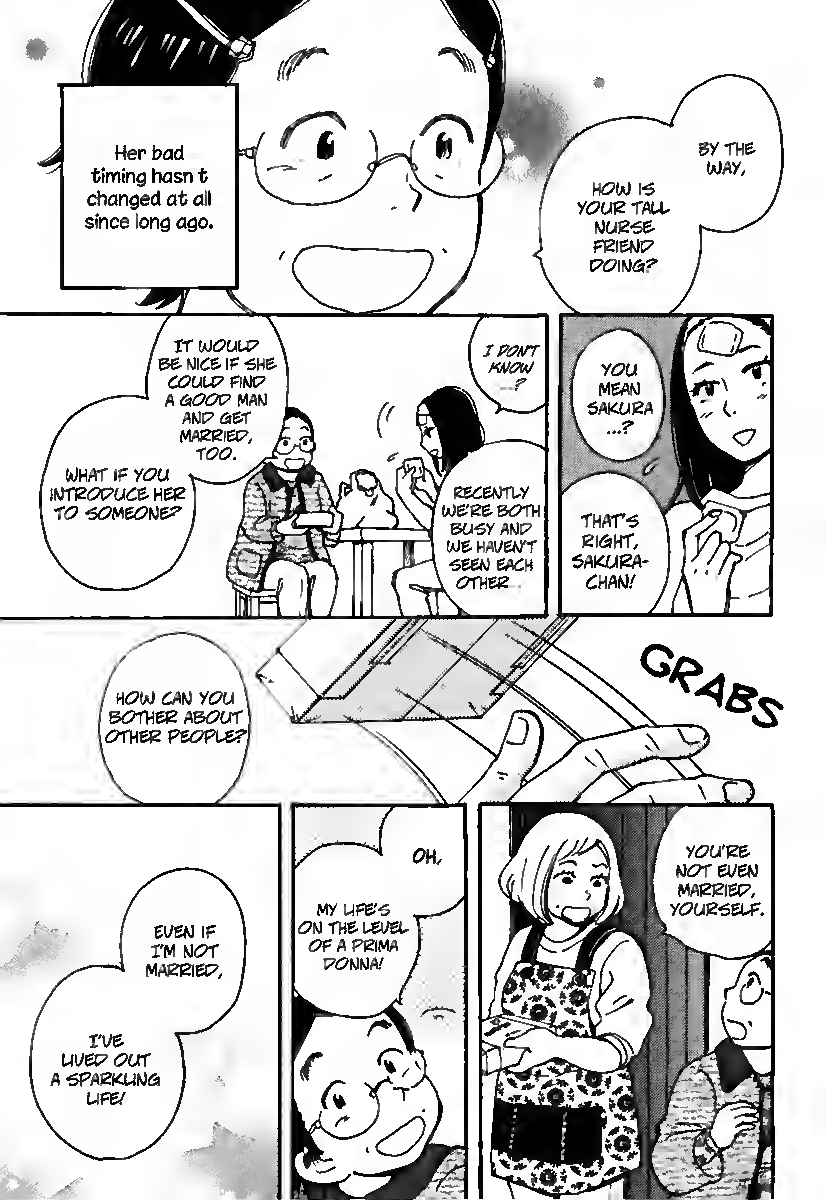
I took our two young children

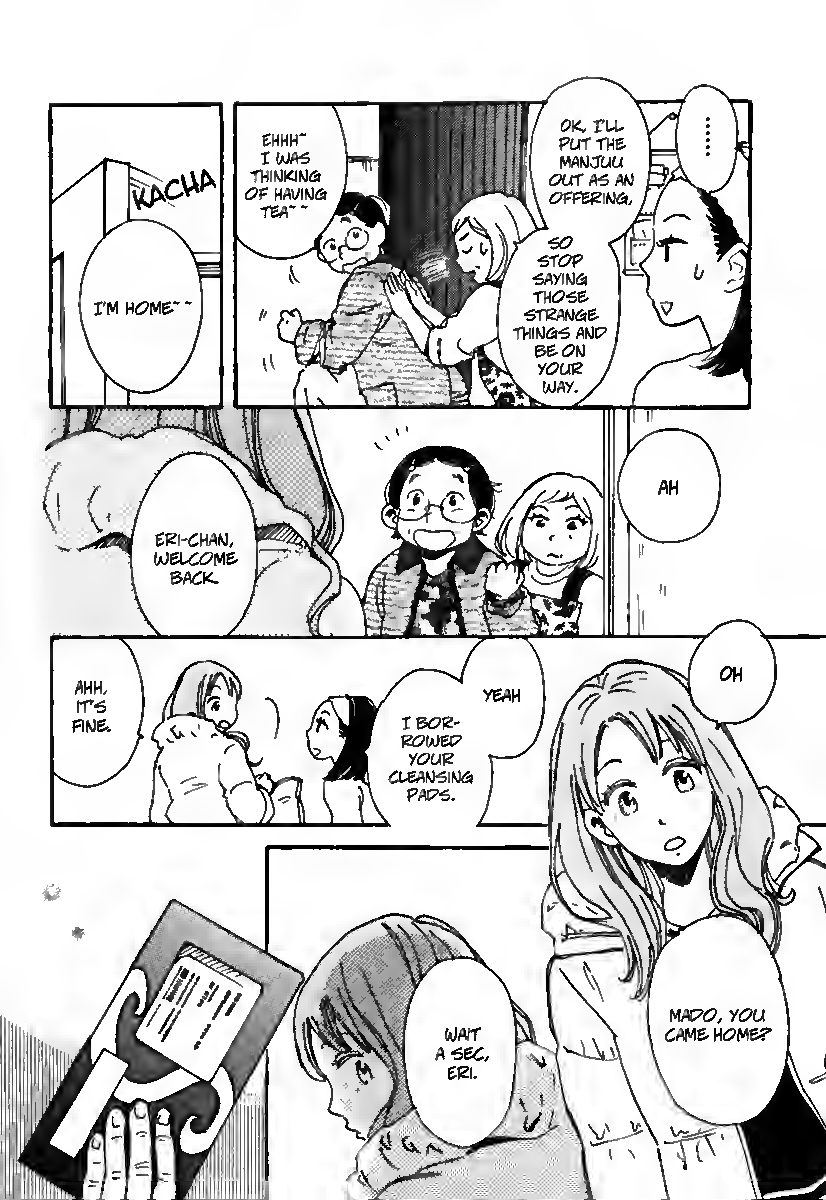
and returned to the town where my parents and sister live.

*SEX FOR A DOOR OPENING



I raised my two children as a single parent,
OH MY~
ARE YOU GOING TO GET MARRIED? I'M HAPPY FOR YOU.
YEAH.
THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW. MY BOYFRIEND IS COMING OVER SO I THOUGHT I'D STAY FOR THE WEEKEND.
and I took out a 35 year loan.
Although it's small and old,
I bought a house.
5 years ago, at the same time my father passed away and my mom came to live in this house,
SHE'S SLEEPING ALREADY!
NON-CHAN, WHERE'S MOM?
WHAT—
IT'S THE MONTH OF DAD'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY.
SO I BOUGHT THESE MANJUU AS AN OFFERING.
my sister also moved close by.


Her bad timing hasn t changed at all since long ago.
BY THE WAY,
HOW IS YOUR TALL NURSE FRIEND DOING?
I DON'T KNOW...?
RECENTLY WE'RE BOTH BUSY AND WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER.
IT WOULD BE NICE IF SHE COULD FIND A GOOD MAN AND GET MARRIED, TOO.
WHAT IF YOU INTRODUCE HER TO SOMEONE?
YOU MEAN SAKURA...?
THAT'S RIGHT, SAKURA-CHAN!
GRABS
HOW CAN YOU BOTHER ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE?
OH,
MY LIFE'S ON THE LEVEL OF A PRIMA DONNA!
EVEN IF I'M NOT MARRIED,
I'VE LIVED OUT A SPARKLING LIFE!
YOU'RE NOT EVEN MARRIED, YOURSELF.


KACHA
I'M HOME~~
EHHH~ I WAS THINKING OF HAVING TEA~~
OK, I'LL PUT THE MANJUU OUT AS AN OFFERING.
SO STOP SAYING THOSE STRANGE THINGS AND BE ON YOUR WAY.
.....
ERI-CHAN, WELCOME BACK.
AH
AHH, IT'S FINE.
I BOR-ROWED YOUR CLEANSING PADS.
YEAH
OH
WAIT A SEC, ERI.
MADO, YOU CAME HOME?

Ah! It's here. It's here—
GRABS
DON'T SAY, "IT'S HERE, IT'S HERE."
THEY'RE IDOLS 10 YEARS YOUNGER THAN YOU.
I GET THE SHIVERS EACH TIME A BLUE ENVELOPE ARRIVES.
PISSED
ISN'T IT FINE, I'M JUST ENJOYING IT.
IT'S FINE TO ENJOY IT BUT YOU'RE GOING TO BE 30 SOON?!
HEY— NON-CHAN,
JEEZ, WHAT?!
She's really so annoying
I HAVE WORK TOMOR-ROW!!
TOMORROW IS SATURDAY AND MADO-CHAN IS HERE TOO, SO
DO YOU WANT TO GO ALL TOGETHER TO THE HOT SPRING?

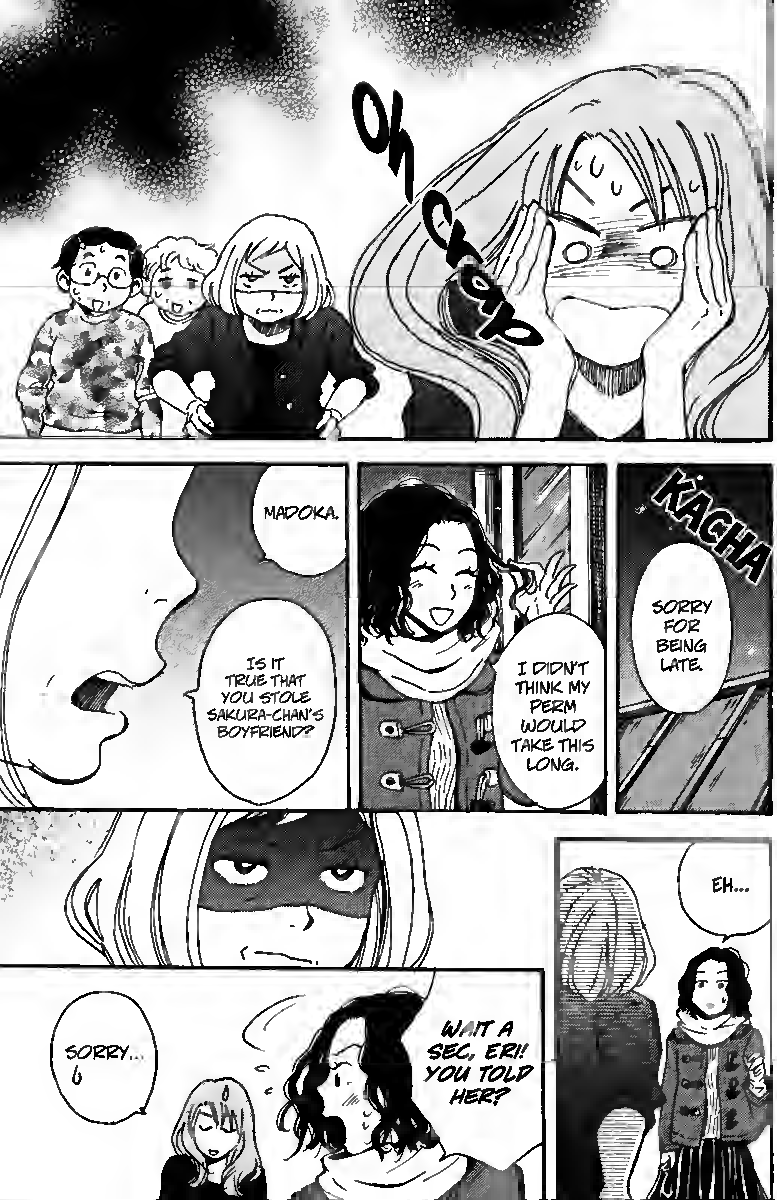
I never thought that
I wanted to redo my life.
FUAN
PRESIDENT.
TOKUI-SAN WAS HERE.
AH, REALLY? I'LL GO DOWN.
HAVE HAYAO-SAN DO IT.
AH
IT'S FINE, IT'S FINE.
I'LL BRING YOU THE TEA RIGHT AWAY WHEN IT'S READY.
I'LL DO IT.
WELL, THANK YOU..

I wonder if I'll have to close the curtains on my life
without seeing those sunny days again.
It's just that
.....
Sometimes suddenly
I'll think of those kinds of things.
ANNOYED
She's here again...
Goodness, at this busy time...

Wa ha ha ha
AH, MAMA, WELCOME HOME.
HAA.
!
WHAT'S THIS!
NOBODY STARTED THE RICE COOKER...!
FUWA
FUWA
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
SORRY, NORIKO..
I MEANT TO TURN IT ON.
IF YOU MEANT TO, IT SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN LIKE THIS!

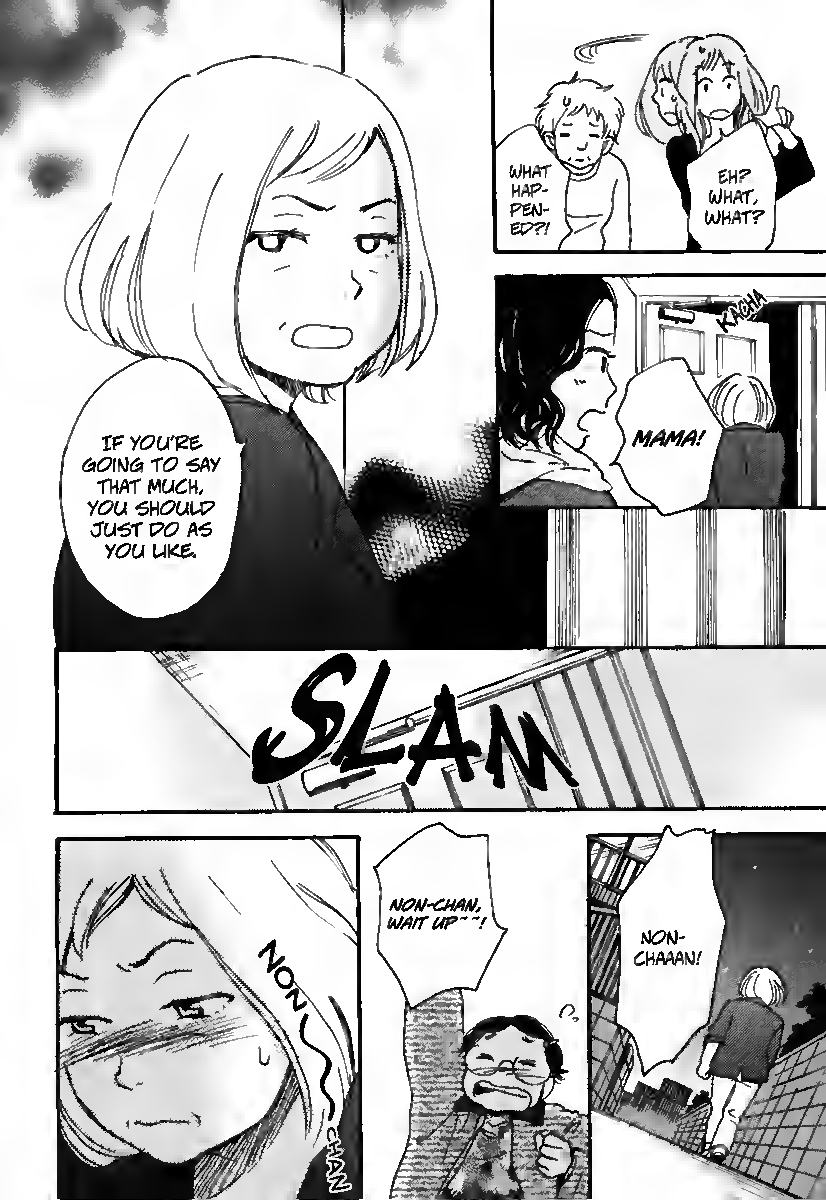
I TOLD YOU TO NOT FORGET TO START THE RICE COOKER, DIDN'T I?
NOW, NOW, NON-CHAN, DON'T GET SO ANGRY.
EIKO, WHAT ARE YOU EVEN DOING HERE THIS LATE?
WHY DON'T YOU JUST STAY HOME AND MAKE DINNER ON YOUR OWN?!
...
YOU GUYS ALL RELY ON ME TOO MUCH.
SO NOISY-
AT LEAST HELP OUT A LITTLE!
I WISH YOU WOULDN'T VENT ON US.

YOU'RE ALREADY TURNING 30, HOW PATHETIC.
KACHA
INSTEAD OF CHASING AFTER YOUNG IDOLS,
HURRY UP AND FIND A MAN TO MARRY.
LEAVE ME ALONE.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, ERI!
EVEN IF I'M GETTING OLD,
AT LEAST I'M NOT LIKE MADO-CHAN,
GOING AROUND STEALING HER FRIEND'S BOYFRIEND.
AH-
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY STEALING?


OH CRAP
KACHA
SORRY FOR BEING LATE.
I DIDN'T THINK MY PERM WOULD TAKE THIS LONG.
MADOKA.
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU STOLE SAKURA-CHAN'S BOYFRIEND?
EH...
WAIT A SEC, ERI! YOU TOLD HER?
SORRY...

IT JUST ENDED UP THAT WAY...
I DIDN'T STEAL HIM.
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, MAMA.
SAYING IT JUST HAPPENED TO END UP LIKE THAT.
DON'T TALK LIKE IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT!
I'M OPPOSED TO THIS MARRIAGE!
YOU MADE EYES AT YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIEND'S BOYFRIEND AND STOLE HIM--
WHAT-...
HURRY AND BREAK UP!
THERE'S NO WAY IT COULD GO WELL!!
NON-CHI'N,
YOU DON'T NEED TO SCOLD HER SO MUCH...
BE QUIET, EIKO!

YOU CAN'T KNOW IF IT WILL GO WELL OR NOT
UNLESS WE GET MARRIED...!
WHAT IF DAD
HAD MARRIED AUNT EIKO INSTEAD OF MOM.
BY THIS TIME...
MADO-CHAN—
Passes
MAMA...!


WHAT HAP-PEN-ED?!
EH? WHAT, WHAT?
KACHA
MAMA!
IF YOU'RE GOING TO SAY THAT MUCH, YOU SHOULD JUST DO AS YOU LIKE.
SLAM
NON-CHAN, WAIT UP~~!
NON-CHAAAN!
NON
CHAN

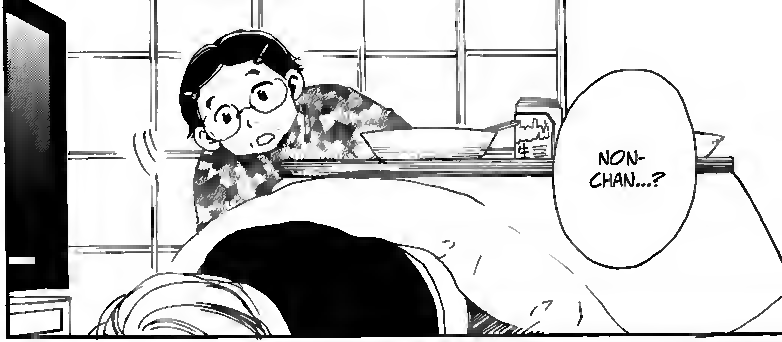
WHEEZE WHEEZE
Non-cha...
JEEZ!!
DON'T CALL MY NAME IN SUCH A LOUD VOICE.
Y-
Even you can be inconsiderate sometimes
Haa Haa
YOU'RE ALWAYS SO IN-CONSID-ERATE.
WHAT PART OF ME IS IN-CONSID-ERATE?!
BE-CAUSE...
YOU DIDN'T LISTEN TO WHAT MADO-CHAN HAD TO SAY AND JUST GOT ANGRY BY YOUR-SELF.
YOU WOULDN'T UNDER-STAND...
YOU WOULDN'T UNDER-STAND HOW I FEEL!

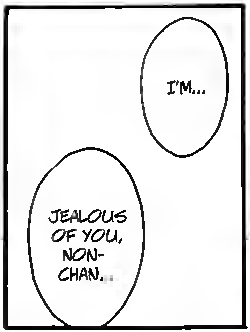
HOW I
SPENT THE PAST 30 YEARS FEELING...
No matter how many years pass,
there are some things that are impossible to forget.
NON-CHAN...
DON'T TOUCH ME...!
Cleaning off the clinging rust
was un-expectedly difficult.

Grumbleeee
.....
WA HA HA HA
I GUESS IF YOU'RE THAT HUNGRY OF COURSE YOU'D BE IN A BAD MOOD.
HOW IS IT?
THIS CURRY IS GOOD FOR A READY-MADE PACK, RIGHT?
BEEF CURRY MEDIUM HOT
BEEF CURRY MEDIUM HOT

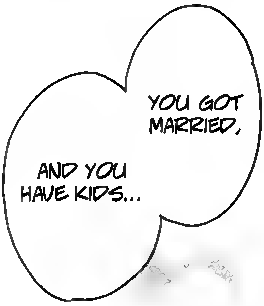
BUT, WELL, I GUESS IT'S FINE ONCE IN A WHILE.
Chew
URGH
Chew
EIKO, IT'S NOT GOOD TO EAT THIS ALL THE TIME.
HEY, NON-CHAN
YOU SHOULD TALK TO HER A BIT WHEN SHE COMES HOME.
Chew Chew
I THINK MADO-CHAN ONLY SAID THOSE THINGS
BECAUSE SHE GOT CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT.

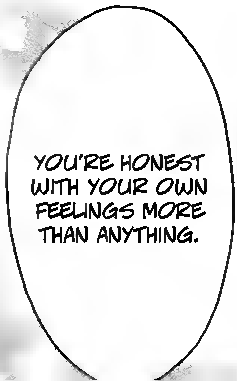
...
Thud
Glug
Glug
Tap
EVEN I..
THOUGHT ABOUT "WHAT IF"..
If I had given up on Shuu that time and handed him over to Eiko,
I wonder if Eiko could have been happy,
and I could have lived a different life...


NON-CHAN...?


I'M...
JEALOUS OF YOU, NON-CHAN...

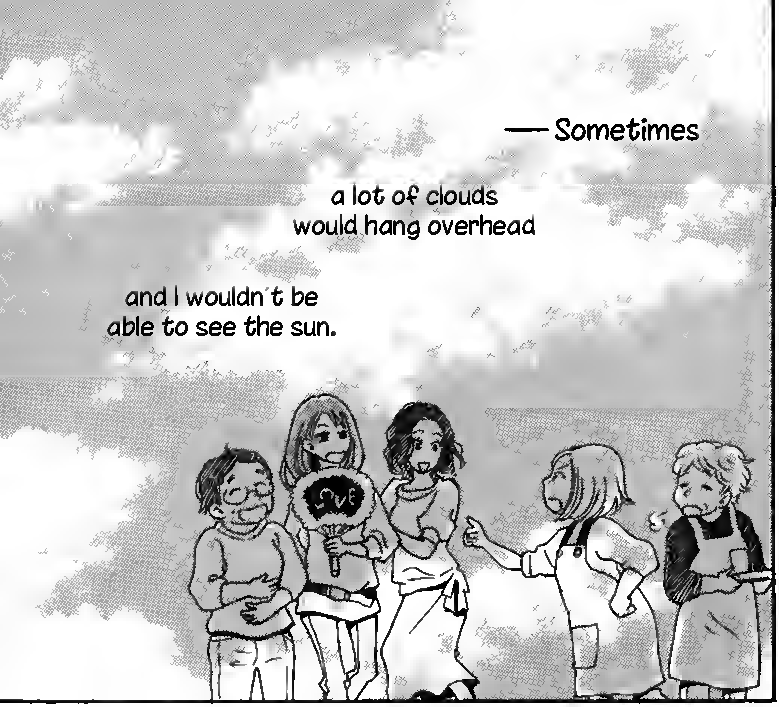
breathes

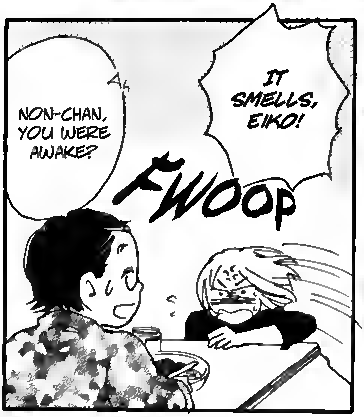

YOU GOT MARRIED,
AND YOU HAVE KIDS...


YOU'RE HONEST WITH YOUR OWN FEELINGS MORE THAN ANYTHING.

"I don't think anything of you."

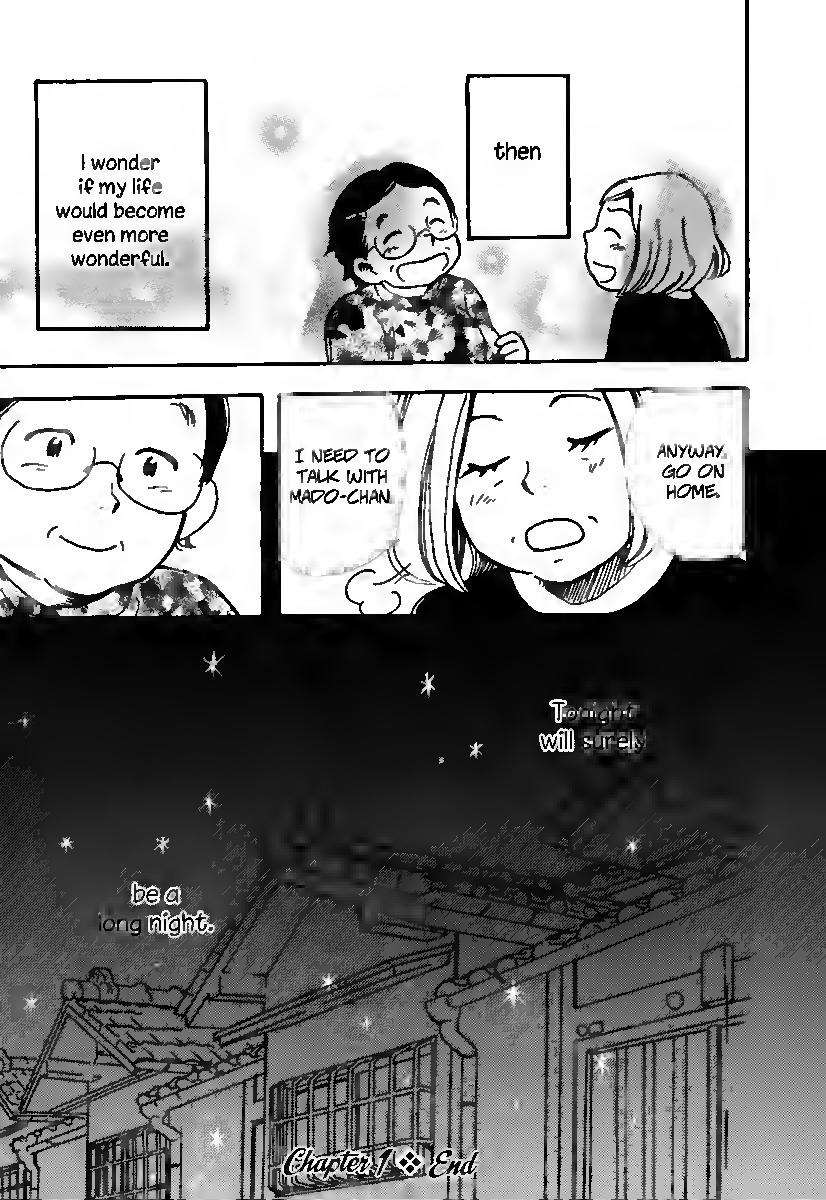
BECAUSE I HAVE YOU AND MOM,
AND MADO-CHAN AND ERI-CHAN.
BESIDES
I CAN'T THINK OF ANY PATH BESIDES THIS ONE.
JUST WITH THAT,
I'M HAPPY.





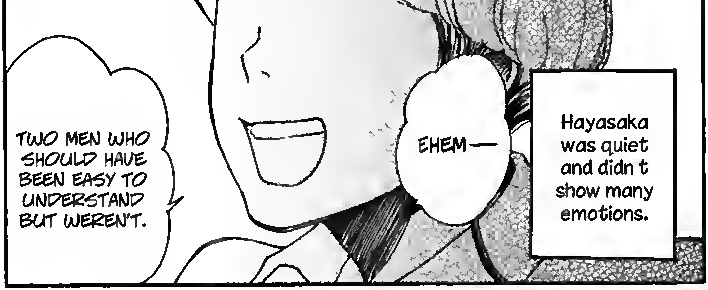
If I could learn to love on that kind of day, too,

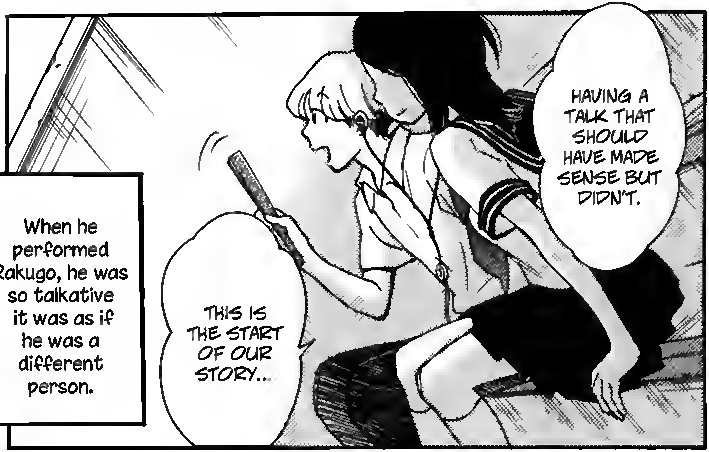
Jeez— Don't feed in the window—

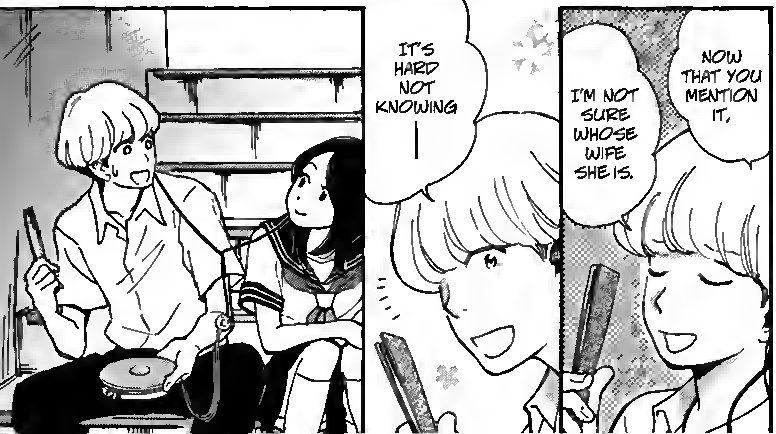

I wonder if my life would become even more wonderful.
then
I NEED TO TALK WITH MADO-CHAN.
ANYWAY, GO ON HOME.
Tonight will surely
be a long night.
Chapter 1 ❖ End

CHA 2 PTER

In my second year of middle school
there was a boy named Hayasaka in my class who liked Rakugo*.
T/N Rakugo is a traditional style of Japanese comic storytelling, kind of like standup comedy but performed while sitting down
LET ME LISTEN, TOO.
FINE, BUT DON'T MESS ME UP.
ROGER!


TWO MEN WHO SHOULD HAVE BEEN EASY TO UNDERSTAND BUT WEREN'T.
EHEM—
Hayasaka was quiet and didn t show many emotions.


When he performed Rakugo, he was so talkative it was as if he was a different person.
THIS IS THE START OF OUR STORY...
HAVING A TALK THAT SHOULD HAVE MADE SENSE BUT DIDN'T.


IT'S HARD NOT KNOWING —
I'M NOT SURE WHOSE WIFE SHE IS.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT,

WHEN YOU NORMALLY TALK YOU SEEM SO INDIFFERENT,
BUT WHEN YOU DO RAKUGO YOU'RE SO ENTHUSIASTIC, HUH——
I was probably
in love with him.
T/N: That brown walking mushroom from Mario.
MADOKA, YOU'RE CLOSE WITH HAYASAKA, HUH.
EH?
IT-IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
HE LIKES RAKUGO, RIGHT?
HE TALKS LIKE AN OLD MAN
AND HIS HAIRSTYLE IS KIND'A LIKE A GOOMBA*.
PFF
IRRITATED

ACTUALLY
I'VE ALWAYS HAD YOU ON MY MIND, TOKITOU-SAN.
IF YOU'D LIKE, PLEASE.
HE'S NOT LIKE AN OLD MAN, HE TALKS NORMALLY!
If anyone made fun of him, even if it was my best friend Sakura, I would get upset.
Maybe his head does kinda look like a Cucumber, but...
But Hayasaka didn't seem to have any feelings for me.
....
IIJIMA?
YEAH, HE'S A GOOD GUY.
WE WERE IN THE SAME CLASS IN 4TH GRADE.
OH REALLY...
POPULAR WITH THE GIRLS TOO.
WHY DON'T YOU SAY YES?

That's it...?
No matter who I went out with,
he didn't seem interested.
GRADUATION CEREMONY
Then, after the graduation ceremony ended
EVERYONE IS GOING OUT TO EAT TOGETHER.
DO YOU WANT TO COME TOO?
I'M FINE.
I'M GOING TO SEE A RAKUGO PERFORMANCE WITH MY DAD.

HEY, HEY, MADOKA.
PAT
was at the class reunion 2 years ago.
Ahh~ I know~
Me too!
Our next meeting
EZONO MIDDLE SCHOOL YEAR 3 CLASS 2 REUNION
Since then, days and months passed by.
DON'T YOU THINK HE TURNED OUT HANDSOME?
THAT GUY STANDING THERE IS HAYASAKA, RIGHT?
many people wore rings on their ring fingers, but
Everyone is already in their 30s, so

his finger was still empty.
AH, TOKITOU.
YOU WERE HERE.
I'VE BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE.
YOU DIDN'T NOTICE ME CAUSE I LOOK PRETTIER, RIGHT?
clack

AHH
THAT'S TRUE.
A half-hearted answer, that isn t really a compliment or an insult.
ANNOYED
That part of him didn t change at all.
WHAT DOES "SE" MEAN AGAIN?
SYSTEM ENGINEER?
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
NOW I'M WORKING MAKING FOREIGN CELL PHONES.
EHHHH~~ AMAZING!
I DON'T KNOW ANYBODY DOING THAT KIND OF WORK.
IT SOUNDS REALLY INTERESTING
Sakura sure is chatting him up...
Even though she used to make fun of him saying he talks like an old man and he looks like a Goomba.
♡ BY THE WAY, I'M A NURSE.
MADOKA DOES CD SALES AT UMEDA'S TOWER RECORDS.

I DON'T LISTEN TO RAKUGO ANYMORE.
DO YOU COME TO BUY RAKUGO CDS?
EHH REALLY?!
I GO TO TONER RECORDS SOMETIMES.
EH...
EXCUSE ME,
CAN I HAVE ANOTHER OF THIS?
No way...
WELL, IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN 10 YEARS.
EVEN HIS TASTES CHANGED.
.....

TONER RECORDS
Hayasaka...
doesn't care about Rakugo anymore?
P.G♥
TOKITOU.
TONER RECORDS
TONER RECO
AH. HAYASAKA.
DO YOU HAVE THE ALBUM BEFORE THIS ONE?
OH, YEAH IT'S THIS ONE.
THANKS.
ARE YOU DOING WELL WITH SAKURA...?
YEAH.
WE'RE DOING PRETTY WELL.
Because of that day

Hayasaka and Sakura started going out.
EH!
SO YOU'RE REALLY SINGLE NOW?!
WELL, YEAH.
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D TURN OUT TO BE SUCH A GOOD MAN, HAYASAKA-
OVER HERE, OVER HERE!
LET ME BE A CANDIDATE FOR YOUR GIRL-FRIEND!
...
Kyaaa~ I said it!
Hah~

I said something to push them along.
Y-
YOU GUYS SHOULD GO OUT.. YOU'RE BOTH SINGLE ANYWAY.
am I doing...
What the heck
OH.. I SEE. SO YOU BROKE UP.
AH.. YEAH.
HELLO...
Ding ling
AHH... SAKURA... WHAT IS IT?
YOU BROKE UP?!
FWP

I GUESS THE PERSONALITY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LOOKS AFTER ALL.
The personality...
That indifferent personality is his good point!
clench
Let me be a candidate for your girlfriend!
Over here, over here!
Even though she doesn't know anything...
anything at all...!!
Nothing, she doesn't know
Because Hayasaka-kun always looks disinterested, it's no fun at all.
Wha...

WHOEVER I DATE IS ALWAYS DISSATISFIED.
Glug Glug
WELL, IT'S BECAUSE I HAVE THIS INDIFFERENT PERSONALITY THAT I'M PROBABLY NO FUN.
THOSE PEOPLE YOU DATED JUST WEREN'T LOOKING HARD ENOUGH.
YOU'RE PLENTY OF FUN!
Clang
LOOK-ING...
NOT...
On that day,

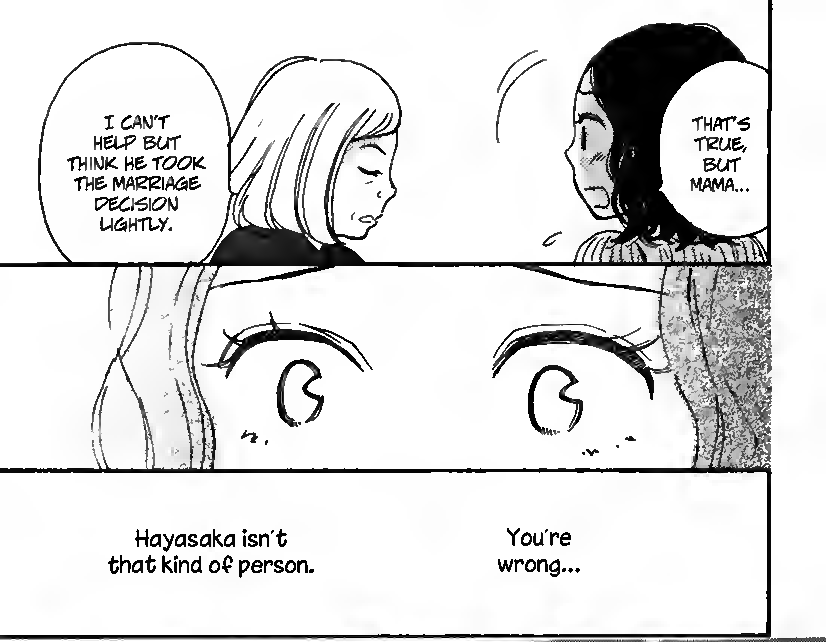
I brought Hayasaka home to my apartment.
emboldened by alcohol,
CHIRP
CHIRP
Kyuuuu
YOU'VE COLLECTED A LOT OF SHIJAKU-SHISHOU'S CDS, HUH.
Ah...
breathes~
T/N: Katsura Shijaku is a famous Rakugo performer.

1
2
I SAW THEM LINED UP ON THE SHELF.
!
AH...
NEXT WEEK, SHIJAKU-SHISHOU IS HAVING A PERFORMANCE. DO YOU WANT TO GO TOGETHER?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...
THAT'S...
EH...
BUT HAYASAKA, YOU SAID YOU DON'T LISTEN TO RAKUGO ANYMORE.
!
YEAH, I DON'T LISTEN TO THE CDS ANYMORE.
BUT IF I'M FREE I GO TO THE PERFORMANCES.
I LIKE THEM BECAUSE THEY HAVE A BETTER SENSE OF PRESENCE THAN THE CDS.

What, so that's how it was...
So he didn't lose interest in Rakugo...
The following next week
He took me to see my first Rakugo performance.
KATSURA SHIJAKU
HEY, DO THE ONE WITH THE SECOND-HAND SHOP.
...should have made sense but didn't...

But
when he does Rakugo he gets enthusiastic...
Hayasaka hasn t changed since middle school.
He s quiet and he doesn t show much emotion.
AHH
YOUR SHIRT'S ALL WRINKLED.
IRONING IS SUCH A PAIN.
IF I WERE YOUR WIFE
Pff
I'D NEVER LET YOU WEAR SUCH A WRINKLY SHIRT.
Hahaha
such a comfort.
For me it was

THAT SOUNDS GOOD.
HUH?
But I never thought
IF IT 'S LIKE THAT, THEN MAYBE I'LL MARRY YOU.
deciding a marriage so easily—
SO, WHAT?
AFTER HAYASAKA-KUN AND SAKURA-CHAN BROKE UP, HE WENT OUT WITH YOU?
YEAH.
SO IT'S NOT LIKE HE WAS TWO TIMING,
AND I DIDN'T STEAL HIM FROM SAKURA.
SOMEHOW I CAN'T TRUST HIM.
HE WENT OUT WITH YOU
PRACTICALLY RIGHT AFTER BREAKING UP WITH SAKURA-CHAN, RIGHT?


I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK HE TOOK THE MARRIAGE DECISION LIGHTLY.
THAT'S TRUE, BUT MAMA...
Hayasaka isn't that kind of person.
You're wrong...

WHY DO YOU WANT TO MARRY ME?
HUH? DID YOU GET A PERM?
Gacha
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE SO EARLY.
CHIRP CHIRP
His answers are always half-hearted but
SPACED OUT
HUH?
he's not like that...

WHY.
BECAUSE IT WENT WITH THE ATMOSPHERE..
THAT'S IT?!
MM... THAT AND..
ALSO, IT'S COMFORTABLE BEING WITH YOU..
AND YOU LIKE RAKUGO..
FUAA~
Clench...
LET'S CALL OFF OUR PLANS FOR YOU TO COME MEET MY MOM TODAY.
EH...?
THE TRUTH IS... I DON'T CARE ABOUT RAKUGO AT ALL

HUH? BUT YOU HAVE A BUNCH OF CDS, AND SINCE WAY BACK YOU...
THAT'S BECAUSE RAKUGO IS WHAT YOU LIKE...!
THE TRUTH IS I NEVER HAD ANY INTEREST IN RAKUGO...!
BUT I THOUGHT IF I LEARNED ABOUT IT I COULD GET CLOSER TO YOU...
I WORKED AT THE CD STORE SO THAT MAYBE SOMEDAY
YOU WOULD COME TO BUY SOMETHING AND WE'D MEET BY CHANCE...

I...
I was so stupid for thinking of something like that...
I'm really stupid...
Ding dong...

MADOKA-
Madoka, come on-
SORRY...
I ENDED UP COMING OVER.

HONESTLY, I'M NOT GOOD WITH WORDS AND I CAN'T SPEAK WELL IN FRONT OF PEOPLE.
...
SO TODAY, PLEASE ALLOW ME TO SPEAK WITH RAKUGO.
MADOKA,
AT LEAST PUT ON SOME MAKEUP.
RAKUGO?
INHALES
EHEM—
LET'S GO BACK IN TIME TO OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL DAYS.
THERE WAS A BOY WHO LIKED RAKUGO BUT WAS BAD WITH WORDS.
THE ONLY PERSON WHO WOULD TALK TO THE BOY WAS A SINGLE GIRL.

?
What the? This guy...
"EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE SO INDIFFERENT WHEN YOU NORMALLY TALK,
WHEN YOU DO RAKUGO YOU HAVE A SUPER STRONG TONE OF VOICE~"
SAID THE GIRL WITH AN INNOCENT SMILE.
TO WHICH THE NAIVE BOY THOUGHT, "MAYBE SHE'S INTERESTED IN ME?"
AND YET, HOLD ON!
INSTEAD, THAT GIRL APPROACHED THE BOY ASKING FOR ADVICE ON LOVE.
AND STARTED DATING ANOTHER MAN.
"SO WHAT, SHE DIDN'T LIKE ME AFTER ALL!"
SINCE THEN, THE DAYS AND MONTHS PASSED, AND WHEN THE BOY BECAME A MAN OF 30,
FATE ALLOWED HIM TO MEET THAT SMOOTH TALKING GIRL ONCE MORE.
TO WHICH HE SAID,
...

"DAMN! THIS TIME I WON'T LET HER SUGGESTIVE WAYS FOOL ME, I'LL PRETEND NOT TO NOTICE!"
THE MAN SWORE TO HIS HEART THAT
HE WOULD NOT ALLOW HER WORDS TO CAUSE HIM SUCH FEELINGS OF EXCITEMENT AGAIN.
WA YA KA SA
YOU CAN'T! NO, CALM DOWN...
THE MAN TOLD HIMSELF OVER AND OVER AGAIN, BUT...
UHAM!!
...
WITH THE SAME INNOCENT SMILE, ONCE MORE,
THIS TIME SHE RECOMMENDED HER FRIEND.

"AHH... SHE HAS NO INTEREST IN ME..."
THE MAN THOUGHT, AND SO HE STARTED DATING THE GIRL'S FRIEND,
BUT THERE WAS NO HEART POUNDING EXCITEMENT...
WELL, OF COURSE THERE WASN'T.
BECAUSE THAT DAY,
I ONLY WENT TO THE REUNION HOPING TO MEET THAT SMOOTH TALKING GIRL...

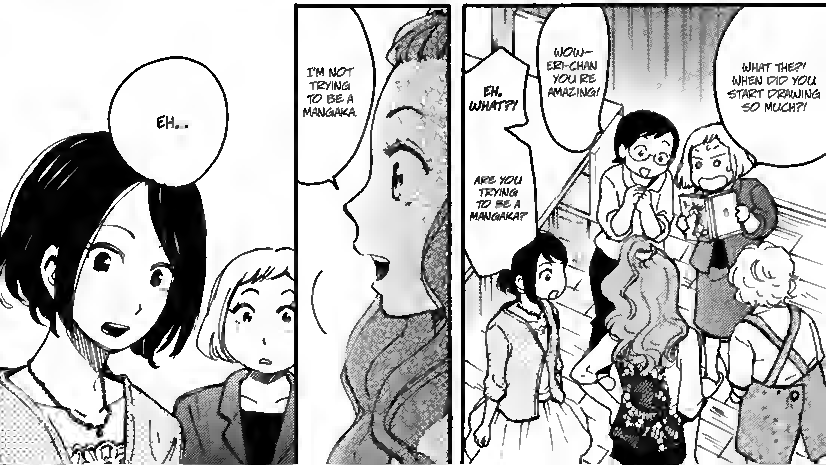
Ahh...
I'm so embarrassed I can't even raise my head.
THAT KIND OF RAKUGO ISN'T INTERESTING AT ALL..
HEY, COULD IT BE THAT THIS STORY IS...
MY SPECIALTY IS CLASSIC RAKUGO.
OF COURSE NOT...
AH... YES.
UM, MOTHER
My heart is pounding as though I'm about to make an entrance onto the Rakugo stage.
Chapter 2 - End

CHAP TER 3

GO-!!
YOU CAN DO IT-!!
Kyaaa
ERI-CHAN IS SO FAST, SHE GOT SECOND!
IT'S AMAZING HOW SHE CAN KEEP UP WITH OOISHI-SAN FROM THE TRACK AND FIELD CLUB
AND SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WITH SUCH A COMPOSED EXPRESSION!
PHEW
2
3

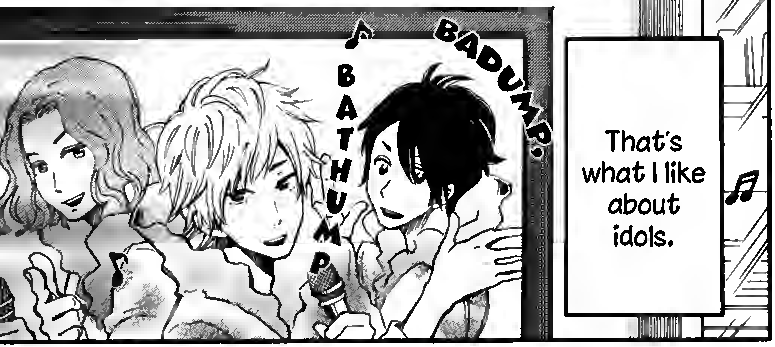
89
TOKITOU.
It sounds bad to say this about myself, but
(MATH) ANSWER SHEET
(TOKITOU ERI)
89
and I'm pretty good at everything no matter what I try,
I'm skillful
sports,
ERI-RIN, YOU'RE SO GOOD AT DRAWING.
and studies, too.
After I entered high school
I tried sending my manga out for submission.
Do your Homies!

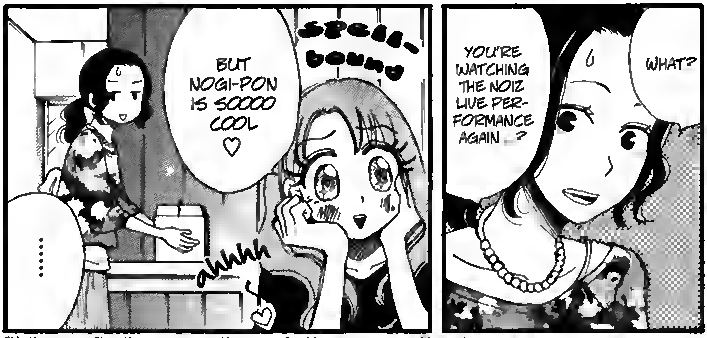
TN: I don't know why it says manga school, it seems like a contest for amateurs/kids.


EH...
I'M NOT TRYING TO BE A MANGAKA.
EH, WHAT?!
WOW~ ERI-CHAN YOU'RE AMAZING!
WHAT THE?! WHEN DID YOU START DRAWING SO MUCH?!
ARE YOU TRYING TO BE A MANGAKA?

Once I made results I could be satisfied with,
I lost interest.
FOR NOW,
I'VE ACCOMPLISHED MY GOAL.
It was the same with love.
ERI-
Once I was satisfied that my feelings were conveyed to my partner,
suddenly those feelings would cool off.

Never once did I make it to the next step.
ACTUALLY, I CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT GOING OUT.
I BROUGHT CAKE—
KACHA
FOR YOU
FOR YOU
swaying
My heart is
for you
my feelings

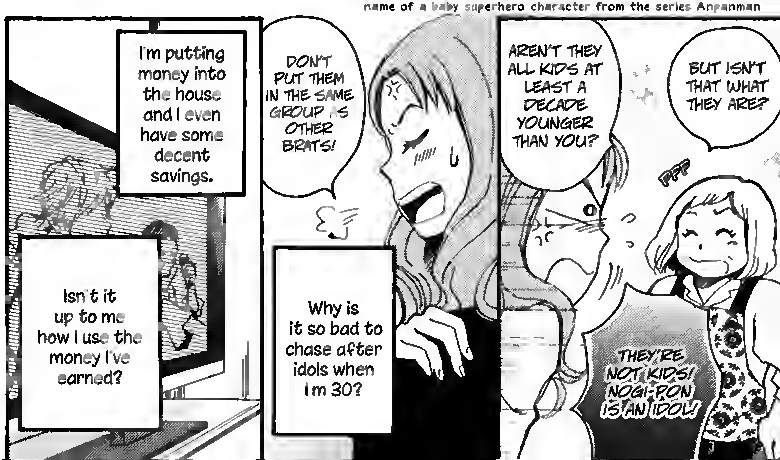




TN: the -pon after the name is another way of addressing someone like -chan or -san

IT MUST BE NICE TO BE SO CAREFREE, HUH-
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE
I WAS GOING THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE TO RAISE YOU TWO.
ANNOYED
YEAH, YEAH, I'VE HEARD THAT A HUNDRE TIMES ALREAD
I'M TELLING YOU, YOU'RE ALMOST 30, YOU KNOW?
IT'S REALLY NOT THE TIME FOR YOU TO KEEP ON CHASING AFTER THOSE BABIES'.
fwp
HEY, WOULD YOU STOP CALLING THEM BABIES?!

TN: She actually calls them "Aka-chan-man" (literally Baby-Man) The name of a baby superhero character from the series Anpanman


BUT ISN'T THAT WHAT THEY ARE?
AREN'T THEY ALL KIDS AT LEAST A DECADE YOUNGER THAN YOU?
PPP
THEY'RE NOT KIDS! NOGI-RON IS AN IDOL!
DON'T PUT THEM IN THE SAME GROUP AS OTHER BRATS!
Why is it so bad to chase after idols when I'm 30?
I'm putting money into the house and I even have some decent savings.
Isn't it up to me how I use the money I've earned?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT, MAMA,
YEAH! IT'S A CHAPEL IN NANKOU WITH A GARDEN.
A CHAPEL MEANS A CHURCH? I WANT TO SEE, TOO.
GRANDMA, YOU CAN COME TOO! IT'S REALLY BEAUTIFUL.
DID YOU FIND A GOOD PLACE?
NEXT WEEK, I'M GOING TO VISIT THE WEDDING VENUE, SO DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH ME?
I heard from my mother
ahahaha
that she got into a job as a college administrator because of the easy acceptance rate,
but with just one word from my father, she quit and got married.
Then soon after she gave birth to my older sister and me, she got divorced.
CLICK
CLICK
After that, she came back to her home-town and found a job at a local rundown office here.
She's been working there while complaining for the last 20 years.

there's no way I think my mom could be happy with her life that was one failure after another.
Honestly...
TOKITOU.
DID YOU FINISH THE LOGO FOR CRYSTAL SHOP?
AHH,
I FINISHED THAT ONE AND SENT IT OFF YESTERDAY.
OH, AS EXPECTED OF YOU, TOKITOU.
RATHER THAN THAT, ONO-SAN. DID YOU RECEIVE THE FILE FROM ABE-SAN, YET?
HE SAID THAT HE SENT IT LAST WEEK.
AH...!
I FORGOT..
YOU'RE A FAST WORKER!
PLEASE PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
WE'RE ALREADY PAST THE DEADLINE.
SORRY, SORRY.

Jeez...
YOU WOULD NEVER GUESS BY LOOKING THAT HE'S YOUR BOSS.
!
IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU BECAME THE CHIEF, TOKITOU-SAN.
HUH?
A CONTRACT EMPLOYEE LIKE ME CAN'T BECOME A CHIEF.
YOU HAVE TO RENEW YOUR CONTRACT EVERY YEAR,
SO I THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU TO BECOME A COMPANY EMPLOYEE, THOUGH.
NO WAY.
IF I BECAME A FULL TIME EMPLOYEE,
I'D HAVE MORE RESPON-SIBILITIES
AND I DON'T EVEN LIKE THIS JOB TO BEGIN WITH.

UM... TOKITOU-SAN...
TODAY, ARE YOU FREE AT ALL...?
?
ACTUALLY THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.
SORRY BUT TODAY'S NO GOOD.
A MEETING...
YOU MEAN THAT THING WHERE PEOPLE WHO LIKE IDOLS ALWAYS GO MEET UP TOGETHER...?
YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT?
I HAVE A MEETING.
AH.. NO..

EVEN FROM A GUY'S POINT OF VIEW, YOU THINK SO TOO, EDA-KUN?!
FWP
NOGI FROM NOIZ.
HE'S PRETTY APPEALING, HUH.
HE'S GOOD AT DANCING AND SINGING SO I THOUGHT HE MUST BE PRETTY TALENTED...
HMM. I GUESS.
HE HAS SUCH A HIGH SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM!!
NOGI-PON IS THE MOST TALENTED OUT OF ALL THE MEMBERS,
THAT'S RIGHT, THAT'S RIGHT-
Even if he's 16 years old
a pro is a pro.
AAAAAA

From my point of view he's much more of an adult than those middle aged guys who do their jobs half-heartedly.

KURARA-SAN, YOU GOT TICKETS FOR NOIZ'S CONCERT FOR BOTH DAYS?!

HUH?!

SO IT'S GOTTEN HARD TO GET TICKETS EVEN IF YOU TRY A FEW TIMES.

RECENTLY NOIZ HAS GOTTEN SUPER POPULAR,

THERE USED TO BE SO MANY TICKETS THEY HAD EXTRA-

OF COURSE I'M GOING, I'M GOING!!

ERI-SAN YOU'RE GOING FOR BOTH DAYS ALSO, RIGHT?

YEAH,

I FAILED TO GET TICKETS FOR 5 DIFFERENT CONCERTS SO I HAD ALREADY GIVEN UP.

I'M SO GLAD~~

quiver

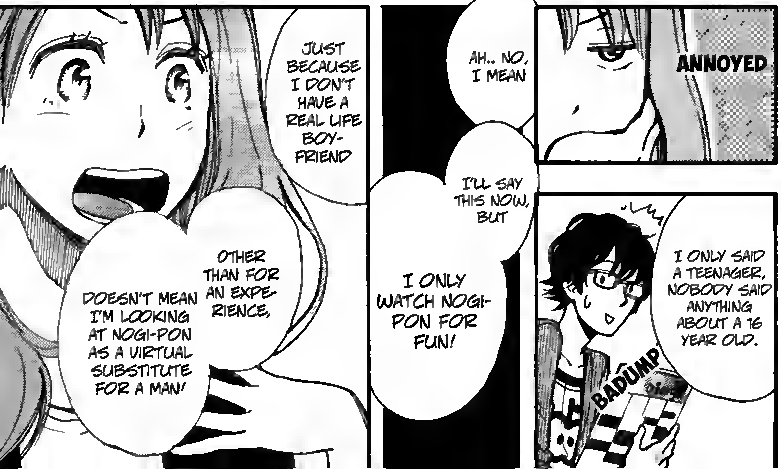
CHOMP
CHOMP
ACTUALLY RECENTLY,
MY OLDER SISTER DECIDED TO GET MARRIED, AND SINCE I'M GONNA BE 30 SOON,
MY MOM IS BEING SUPER ANNOYING ABOUT IT--
ERI-SAN, YOU STILL LIVE WITH YOUR FAMILY, RIGHT?
I LIVE WITH MINE TOO. SO ON THE DAYS WHEN I GET THE BLUE ENVELOPE THEY ALL MAKE MEAN COMMENTS--
SAME HERE, SAME HERE!
AYA-CHAN, DON'T YOU LIVE WITH YOUR FAMILY, TOO?
THEY DON'T BOTHER YOU?
BADUMP
HUH...
GLANCES
NOD
...
ACTUALLY...
I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU GUYS...

M... MARRIED?!
HUUUH-HHHHH...
I'M THE OLDEST OF THIS GROUP, AND I'M ALMOST HO, YOU KNOW?
I THOUGHT IF I DIDN'T DO SOMETHING SOON I'D BE IN TROUBLE.
SO I WENT TO A MARRIAGE COUNSEL.
WHA...
ACTUALLY IT WAS HARD FOR ME TO TELL EVERYONE.
BUT I'VE DECIDED TO GET MARRIED, TOO
It's gotta be... a lie...
AH... BUT
I'LL STILL BE A FAN.
LET'S KEEP MEETING UP LIKE ALWAYS, OK?

Now that I think of it,
"Even if I get married I won't stop being a fan."
"I'll keep going to concerts,
and I'll come to our meetings, too."
last year there was someone else
who said those things after getting married.
Within a month she got pregnant,
and we totally lost contact with her...
BADUMP
BADUMP
BATHUMP
ARE YOU WATCHING THOSE BABIES AGAIN?
I'LL SAY THIS NOW, BUT
FROM THOSE KIDS' POINT OF VIEW YOU'RE AN OLD LADY.
In 10 years I'll be 40.
In 20 years I'll be 50.

And in 20 years he'll still be 36.
But in 10 years Nogi-pon will still only be 26.
♪
♪
This feeling...
when I think about it I feel so hopeless.
I wonder why...

I WONDER IF A WOMAN OVER 30 MUST SEEM LIKE AN OLD LADY.
FROM A TEENAGER'S POINT OF VIEW,
HEY...
HMMM. .
FROM A 16 YEAR OLD'S POINT OF VIEW,
I GUESS IT WOULD, MORE OR LESS.


JUST BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE A REAL LIFE BOY-FRIEND
OTHER THAN FOR AN EXPE-RIENCE,
DOESN'T MEAN I'M LOOKING AT NOGI-PON AS A VIRTUAL SUBSTITUTE FOR A MAN!
AH.. NO, I MEAN
I'LL SAY THIS NOW, BUT
I ONLY WATCH NOGI-PON FOR FUN!
ANNOYED
I ONLY SAID A TEENAGER, NOBODY SAID ANYTHING ABOUT A 16 YEAR OLD.
BADUMP

BEING LOOKED AT WITH SUCH SCORNFUL EYES, LIKE, "LOOK AT THAT LONELY WOMAN"
REALLY PISSES ME OFF!
pff
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN,
I GUESS YOU DON'T REALIZE. OR,
Huhhh-hhhh?!
TOKI-TOU-SAN, YOU'RE CUTE.
WELL, THAT PART IS WHAT MAKES YOU CHARMING, THOUGH.
BLUSH!!!

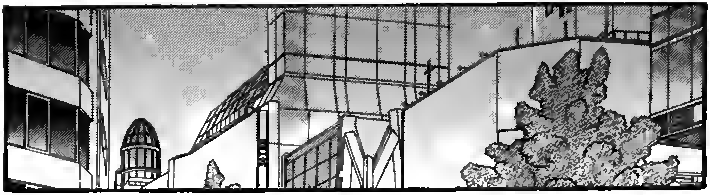
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M BEAUTIFUL AT ALL
AND I'LL BE DAMNED IF I'M CHARMING.
C...
COULD YOU STOP SAYING SUCH WEIRD THINGS?!
He says I'm "cute"...!
He says I'm "cute."

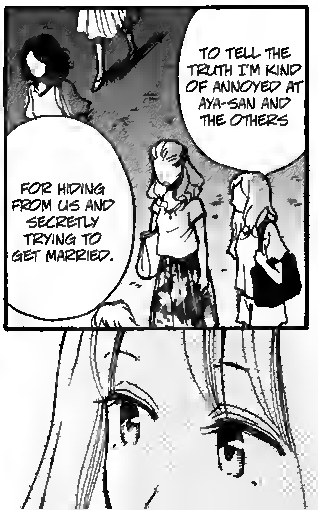
How many years has it been since I've been told that...
glances
BADUMP
FWP
Eek-
?

Something like that has to be lip service.
"Tokitou-san, you're cute."
KENTOOOOOO
NOGI-POOOOON
SUZUUUUUU
NOGI-POOOOON!
KYAAAAAA
NOGI-POOOOOON
KYAAAAAAAAA
BADUMP
BATHUMP
NOGI
WHA...
Boo
UMU

For just a second Nogi-pon looked like Eda-kun.
GYAAAAAAA
LOVE ノギ NOIZ
ERI-SAN?
I'm just a desperate woman...
Like this, no matter how you look at it
It... it's no good...!
Just one little compliment from that guy made me so conscious of him.
AAAAAA
I spent so much time away from love that
KYAAAA

Get yourself together! Eri!





If I were still in my early 20s
"Even if we don't get married,
let's always cheer for Nogi-pon!!"
I would be able to say something stupid like that, but
I'm already turning 30,
so I can't say those kinds of things so easily...
THEN I'LL CALL YOU AGAIN
More More M

EDA-KUN...?!
CLATTER

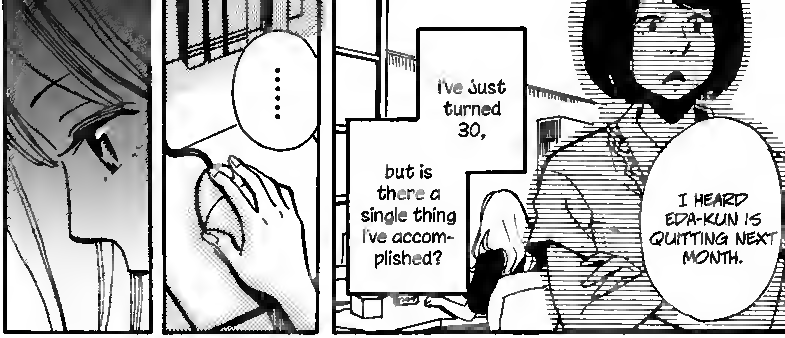
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU DID JUGGLING.
YOU SURPRISED ME.
IN COLLEGE I SPENT ABOUT A YEAR ABROAD IN EUROPE.
I STARTED DOING IT THEN...
YES...
I THOUGHT YOU WENT ON VACATION ABROAD, BUT YOU WERE ACTUALLY DOING THAT?!
WAS THAT AROUND SEPTEMBER?!
SORRY...
LAST YEAR I MADE IT TO 6TH PLACE IN THE WORLD COMPETITION.
EHHH?!
YOU WERE SO MUCH MORE LIVELY THAN WHEN YOU'RE AT WORK.
RATHER THAN THAT, EDA-KUN,
AREN'T YOU MORE SUITED TO DOING SOMETHING LIKE THIS INSTEAD OF WORKING?

ACTUALLY I'M THINKING OF QUITTING WORK.
Slurp
HMMM...
EHH?!
I THOUGHT I'D TRY TO BECOME A STREET PERFORMER FOR REAL.
Eh... wait... you're going to quit work and be a street performer?!
YES.

I'M ALMOST 30, BUT
I REALIZED THAT I STILL HAVEN'T ACCOMPLISHED ANYTHING.
BUT
ISN'T IT DIFFICULT TO MAKE A LIVING OFF OF JUST STREET PERFORMING...
I CAN LIVE FOR A LITTLE WHILE OFF THE MONEY I'VE SAVED UP.
SO I'M THINKING OF GOING ABROAD TO STUDY.

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M REALLY WISHING FOR.
IF I STAY AT THE OFFICE I CAN GET ALONG OKAY WORKING AND LIVING THIS STABLE LIFE-STYLE, BUT—
……

Eda-kun
announced the next day that something came up so after next month he'll stop working.
I WANT TO TEST MY BOUNDARIES.



The reason Nogi-pon seems to sparkle isn't just because he's an idol I can never have.

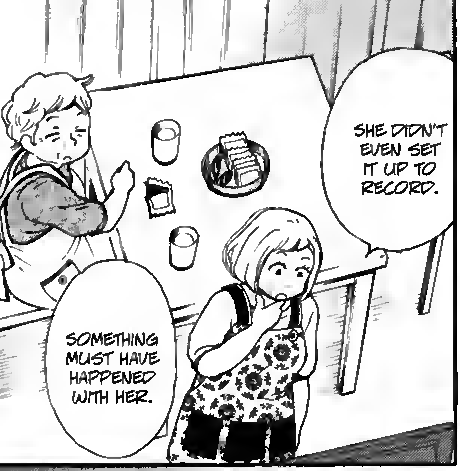
He chases after the future without fear of failing.

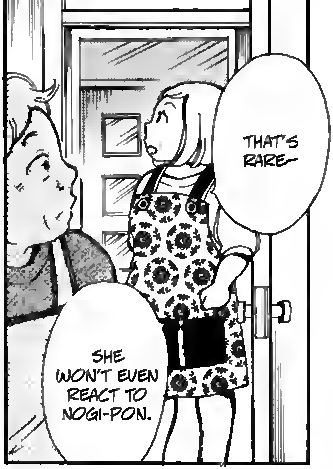
Isn't that the real reason I'm so taken with him?

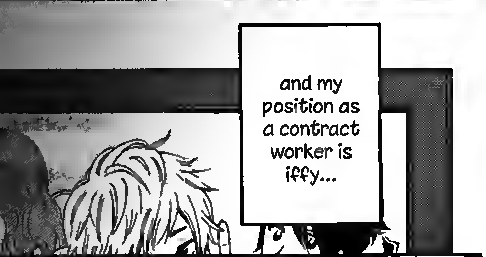
Chapter 3 - End

CHAPTER 4
ERI~~
NOIZ IS ON TV~~

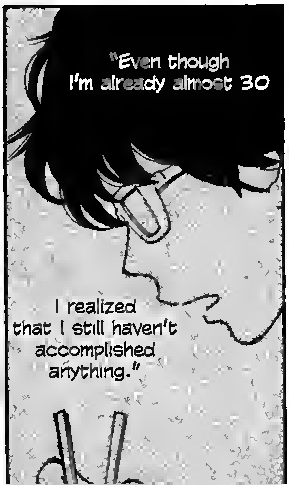
HEY, ERI, ARE YOU ASLEEP~?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO WATCH NOGI-PON~??
.....
To be honest,
it's not like I'm without doubts
about my current enthusiasm for Nogi-pon.







Even though I'm 30, I still don't have a boyfriend who I might be able to marry,



The truth is that everything always

makes me anxious somehow about my place in the world.

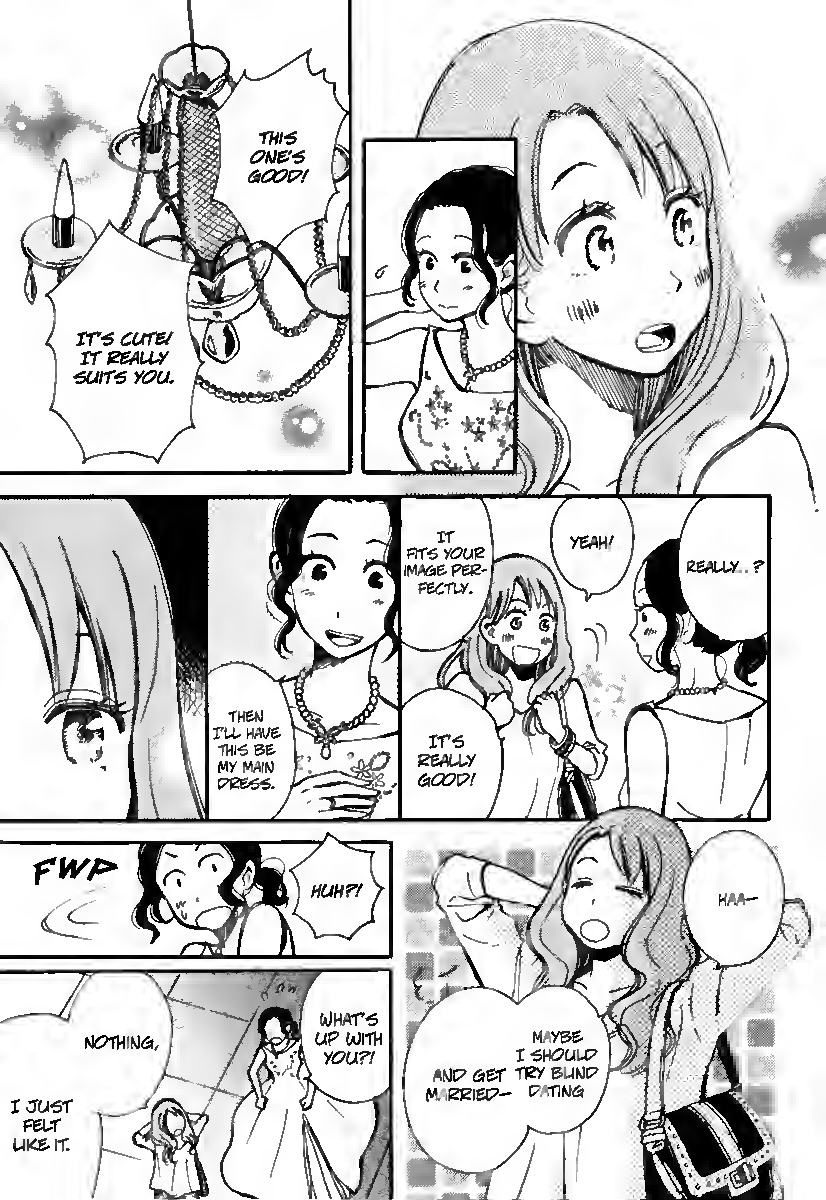
ABE-SAN, COULD YOU LOOK AT THIS FOR ME?
IT'S THE RECOMMENDED STATIONARY SECTION FOR NEXT MONTH.
I WAS THINKING OF GOING WITH THIS.
OHH, THIS IS GOOD.
LET'S DO THIS.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I'm counting on you.
SEEMS MORE LIVELY, LIKE HE CUT LOOSE.
SOMEHOW EDA-KUN
HE REALLY DOES.

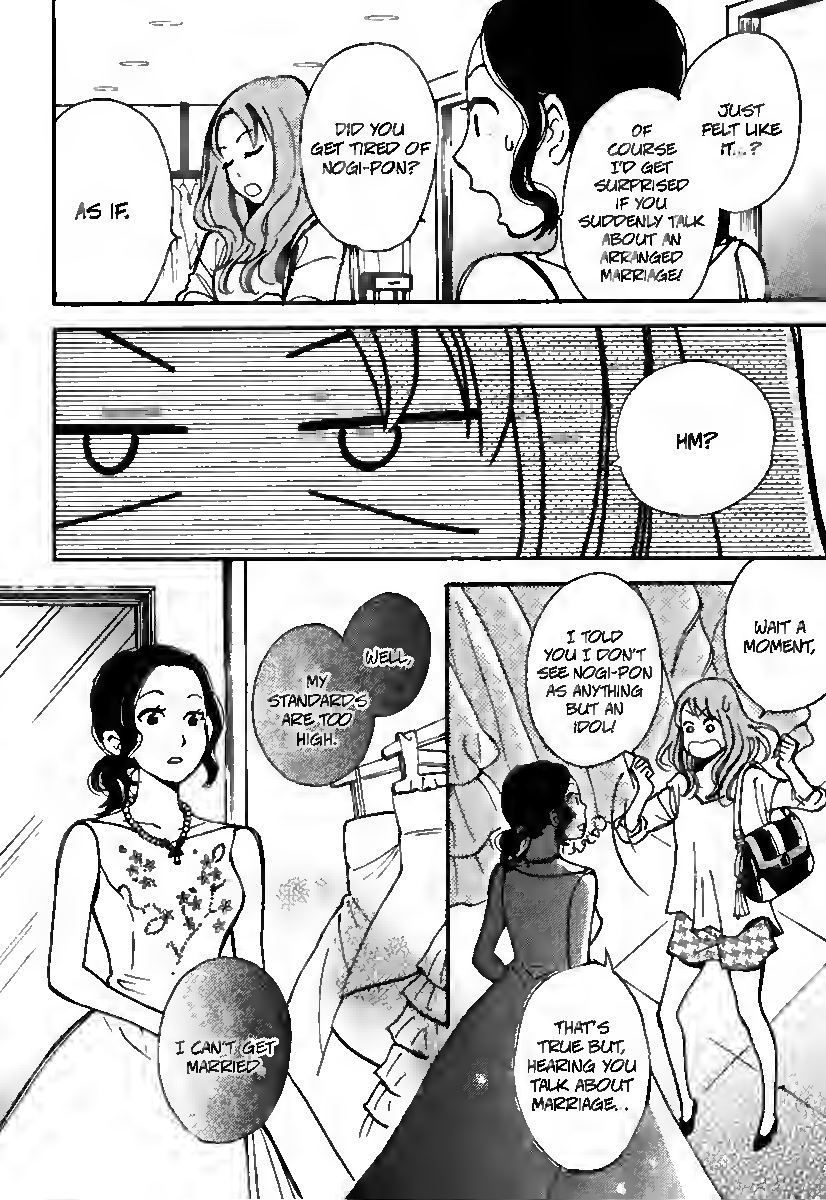
CLICKITY
CLICK
Enough to put the breaks on this useless pride of mine.
HAA...
I'm sure I've never once bet my life on such a gamble like Eda-kun.
HE'S REALLY SOMETHING, THOUGH.
QUITTING THE COMPANY HE WORKED AT FOR YEARS,
AIMING TO BE A STREET PERFORMER.

TOKITOU-SAN,
IF YOU'RE FREE THIS WEEKEND, WOULD YOU COME WATCH?
WHAT'S THIS?
IT'S AN EVENT FEATURING A COLLECTION OF PERFORMERS LIKE ME—
DANCING, RECITATION, SHAMISEN, SINGING.
IF YOU'D LIKE. .
STARE
WHAT, WHAT'S THAT?
EVERYONE PLEASE COME IF YOU'D LIKE.
I'LL BE PARTICIPATING IN IT A LITTLE AS WELL.
AH-
OHH-

Vol.3
SORRY, BUT
I'VE GOT SOME ERRANDS SO I CAN'T GO.
I WAS FREE THIS WEEKEND ANYWAY SO I'LL GO.
ME TOO!
THANK YOU.
I have a feeling I'll just be depressed.
Even if I go,

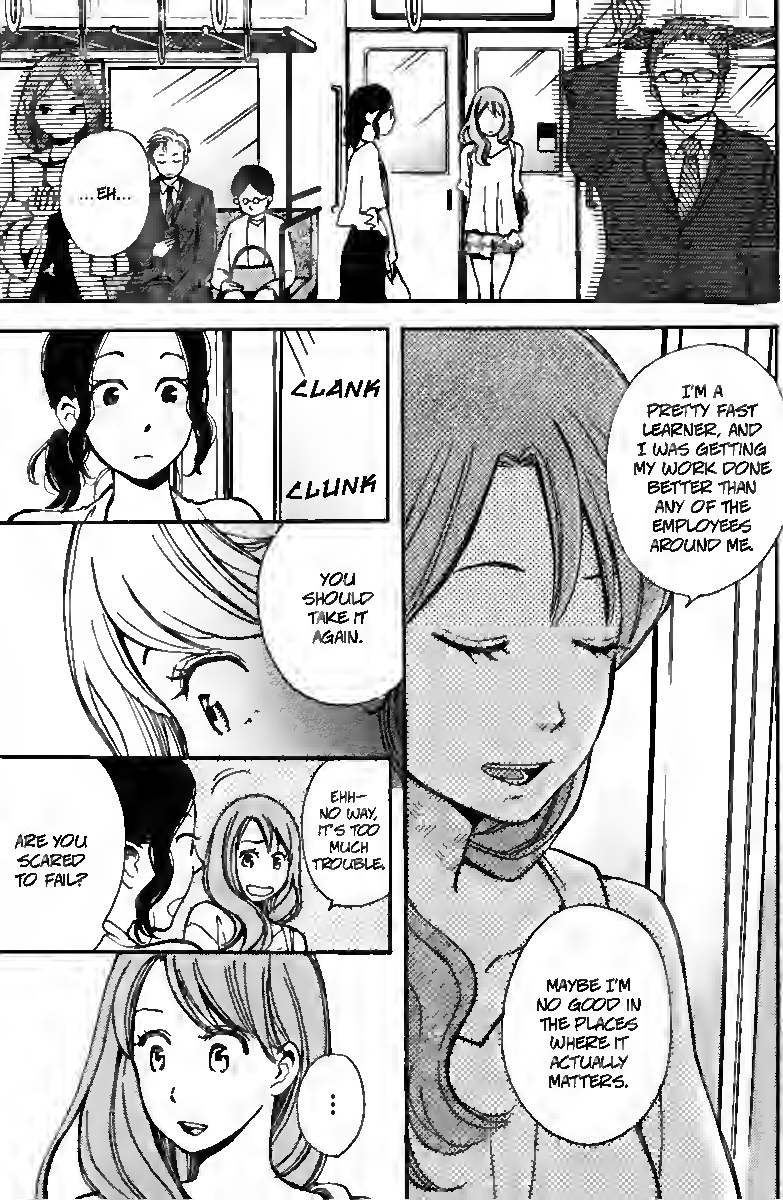
I'M SORRY ERI—
TODAY MAMA AND MY FIANCE BOTH COULDN'T MAKE IT—
AHH IT'S FINE, I WAS FREE TODAY ANYWAY.
MAKING YOU COME ALONG TO MY DRESS FITTING.
CLACK
HEY,
DON'T YOU THINK THIS WOULD LOOK GOOD?
AH.. IT'S CUTE.
...
CLACK
IT SUITS YOU NICELY.


THIS ONE'S GOOD!
IT'S CUTE! IT REALLY SUITS YOU.
IT FITS YOUR IMAGE PERFECTLY.
YEAH!
REALLY..?
IT'S REALLY GOOD!
THEN I'LL HAVE THIS BE MY MAIN DRESS.
FWP
HUH?!
HAA—
MAYBE I SHOULD TRY BLIND DATING
AND GET MARRIED—
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?!
NOTHING.
I JUST FELT LIKE IT.


AS IF.
DID YOU GET TIRED OF NOGI-PON?
OF COURSE I'D GET SURPRISED IF YOU SUDDENLY TALK ABOUT AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE!
JUST FELT LIKE IT...?
HM?
I CAN'T GET MARRIED.
WELL, MY STANDARDS ARE TOO HIGH.
I TOLD YOU I DON'T SEE NOGI-PON AS ANYTHING BUT AN IDOL!
WAIT A MOMENT,
THAT'S TRUE BUT, HEARING YOU TALK ABOUT MARRIAGE. .

From the start,
it was always easier to pretend
I wasn't really serious.
Rather than that, what do you think about the re-dyed dresses?
I don't want to see myself getting hurt when things don't go well.
clank
clank
OPEN!!
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TODAY.
THANKS TO YOU I FOUND A DRESS I LIKE.
THAT ONE REALLY SUITS YOU.
WON'T HAYASAKA-SAN FALL FOR YOU ALL OVER AGAIN?
AH..
HOW'S YOUR WORK, ERI? IS IT BUSY?
IT WOULD BE NICE IF HE DOES.

BUT MY JOB NOW IS FUN SO IT'S WORTH IT.
MY BOSS IS UNRELIABLE SO I HAVE A LOT TO DO.
MM... I GUESS.
CLANK
WHAT IF YOU TRY IT ONCE?
THERE'S A TEST TO BECOME FULL TIME, RIGHT?
NOT AT ALL.
IT'S EASIER ON ME THE WAY IT IS NOW.
YOU DON'T WANT TO BECOME A FULL TIME EMPLOYEE?
TWO YEARS AGO I TRIED THE TEST ONCE AND FAILED.
I KEPT QUIET TO YOU AND MAMA ABOUT IT, BUT


...EH...
CLANK
CLUNK
YOU SHOULD TAKE IT AGAIN.
I'M A PRETTY FAST LEARNER, AND I WAS GETTING MY WORK DONE BETTER THAN ANY OF THE EMPLOYEES AROUND ME.
EHH— NO WAY, IT'S TOO MUCH TROUBLE.
ARE YOU SCARED TO FAIL?
MAYBE I'M NO GOOD IN THE PLACES WHERE IT ACTUALLY MATTERS.
...

AREN'T YOU CLEVER, ERI?
YOU'RE JUST SHOWING HOW CLEVER YOU ARE AND RUNNING AWAY.

IF YOU STAY LIKE THAT,
NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME PASSES
YOU'LL NEVER GET THE THINGS YOU REALLY WANT.
FSHHHH

4
I'm always running away
Is that so bad?!
from work and from love.
I'm so scared to fail that
I can't take a step forward...

NOIZ
MERI
.....
NOIZ
The truth is even I
hate myself for being like this so much that I can't stand it.

CREAK
TODAY I AM HAPPY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY
TO EXPRESS MYSELF AND COLLABORATE
That will be 5,000 yen, please.
WITH MANY ARTISTS.
HELLO.
MY NAME IS EDA REIJI.
I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY YOURSELVES UNTIL THE END
WHAT.
DIDN'T YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DO TODAY?
AH...
HUH? TOKITOU-SAN.
CLACK...

clang
UM..
I FINISHED EARLIER AND I HAPPENED TO PASS NEARBY..
AH, IT'S STARTING.
CLACK
CLACK

"Actually I'm thinking of quitting work."
OHH! HE'S REALLY GOOD!
IT'S LIKE AS IF HE'S A DIFFERENT PERSON.
"I thought I'd try to become a street performer for real."
clack

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
OHH
CLAP
The future I can't even take a step towards,
fwp
he's already starting to walk there.
FOR THE NEXT ACT
I WOULD LIKE TO ATTEMPT A CHALLENGE TECHNIQUE THAT I'VE NEVER PERFORMED IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE.

AMAZING.
? PINS?!
!
CLATTER

CLATTER
CLATTER
I'M SORRY.
I'LL TRY AGAIN.
...
AH—
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
I'M SORRY. I'LL TRY ONCE MORE.
CLATTER

At the highlight of today's show,
Eda-kun failed many times over.

In the end he didn't succeed even once.

GOOD WORK.
THE CHIEF AND EVERYONE WERE SAYING YOU'RE PROBABLY FEELING DOWN.
SO THEY TRIED TO BE CONSIDERATE BY GOING HOME FIRST.
TOKITOU-SAN!
MM.

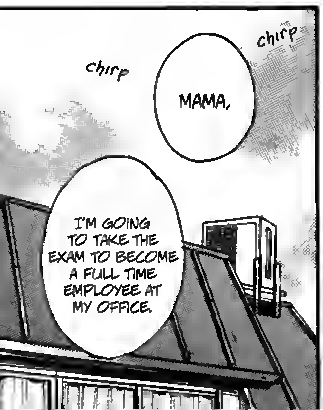
I SEE..
Thanks
SOMEHOW I SHOWED EVERYONE AN UNCOOL SIDE OF MYSELF
IT WAS UNCOOL, BUT
I WAS MOVED.
IF I WERE YOU,
SURELY I WOULD HAVE BEEN SO BOTHERED BY THE AUDIENCE THAT I COULDN'T CONTINUE PERFORMING.

I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE DONE THE CHALLENGE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
I'D BE SO SCARED TO FAIL,
ACTUALLY
I'M KIND OF A SORE LOSER. BUT
I THINK I'M GLAD I FAILED TODAY.
FAILING
ISN'T SOMETHING THAT JUST HURTS YOURSELF.

I WAS ABLE TO RE-CONFIRM MY LACK OF EXPERIENCE.
IN ORDER TO PASS THE WALL IN FRONT OF ME, I REALIZED MY CURRENT PRACTICE ISN'T ENOUGH.
I'LL DEFINITELY REGAIN MY STRENGTH
FROM THE BLOWS I SUFFERED TODAY.
...
...MAYBE I'LL
TRY HARDER, TOO...

I ACTUALLY LIKE MY WORK NOW.
THE TRUTH IS I WANT TO BECOME A FULL TIME EMPLOYEE.
YEAH.
YOU CAN DO IT, TOKITOU-SAN.
WE'RE AIMING FOR DIFFERENT PATHS,
BUT LET'S BOTH TRY OUR BEST.

Surely I'll be able
to do my best.
COULD IT BE THAT GIRL JUST NOW IS..
HEY,
NO WAY.
RIGHT,
I TALKED ABOUT HER BEFORE...
COULD IT BE YOU TOLD HER?!



-One week later

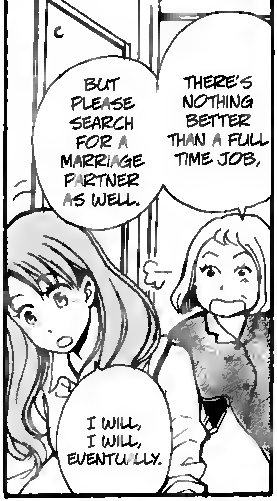
Eda-kun quit work and left for Europe.

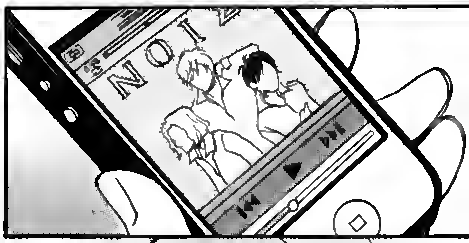
I'll be reborn

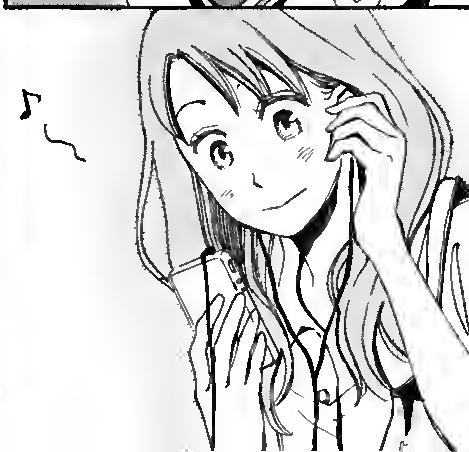
ga-cha

I'LL BE BACK LATER--

into a different person from the one I was until yesterday.







Chapter 4 - End

The first time I heard about it
was just a while after I started working.
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT NOW SINCE YOU'RE AN ADULT—
YOUR FATHER WHO I DIVORCED
ACTUALLY WANTED
TO TAKE AUNT EIKO AS HIS WIFE INSTEAD OF ME.

CHAP TER 5

HUH...?
BUT WASN'T DAD GOING OUT WITH MOM?

THEY DIDN'T HAVE AN AFFAIR.
SO THAT MEANS DAD HAD AN AFFAIR WITH AUNT EIKO?!
EH... WHAT?!
WHEN I WAS 19
YOUR DAD HIT ON ME AND WE STARTED GOING OUT.
THAT'S RIGHT.
SHE'S NOT THE KIND OF PERSON WHO COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOUR AUNT IS HONEST.

That story
ended with an ambiguous feeling.
WAHHHH~ ~
THIS WILL BE THE VENUE FOR MADO-CHAN'S WEDDING?!
IT'S LOVELY!!
IT SEEMS PRETTY GOOD, RIGHT?
THAT'S MY MADO-CHAN!
YOU FOUND A GOOD PLACE!
AS EXPECTED OF MY BOAST-WORTHY NIECE!
... NO, THAT PLACE IS FAMOUS.
SO MOST PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT IT.
YOU HAVE A GOOD SENSE!!
This aunt of mine
was once the object of Dad's affections.

I can't imagine it at all.
CLACK
THANKS, MAMA.
HEY EIKO, YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN LOOKING FOR A WHILE
SHOW IT TO ME TOO--
YOU DID TAKE A WHILE--
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, MADOKA,
DID YOU TELL YOUR FATHER YET THAT YOU'RE GETTING MARRIED?
AH..
HE CALLED TO BRAG ABOUT HOW HAPPY HE WAS.
My mom and dad divorced around when I was in kindergarten.
My mom took my sister and me back to the house where she grew up.
Later, my dad met an older woman and remarried.
HEY.. MAMA,
ABOUT THE WEDDING CEREMONY..

TO INVITE DAD?
IS IT OK
.....
Ah... no...
If everyone's against it
I won't do it, but...
NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF A PERSON HE IS
IT'S FINE WITH ME.
HE'S STILL YOUR FATHER.

THAT'S RIGHT!
LET'S SHOW SHUJI-SAN HOW BEAUTIFUL MADO-CHAN LOOKS IN A WEDDING DRESS!
Wa ha ha ha
GO AHEAD AND INVITE HIM.
LOT OF THINGS HAPPENED, BUT IT'S IN THE PAST NOW.
I'M FINE WITH IT, TOO.
did I grow up in an affluent household, but
By no means
Sorry... Non-chan, you didn't get to eat any?
Wa ha ha ha
you ate my share of manjyu too?!
Want a sec, Eiko,
WA HA HA HA HA
I love
this kind of lively and carefree family.

AHHH...
I'M KIND OF NERVOUS NOW.
deep breath
WHAT SHOULD I DO IF HE DOESN'T LIKE ME?
pff
he he
he he
EVEN YOU GET NERVOUS, HUH, HAYASAKA?
OF COURSE I DO...
I'M A HUMAN TOO.
IT'S FINE.
HE'S NOT A SCARY GUY.
MADOKA.
^_^
SORRY I'M LATE.
HE'S JUST
KIND OF...
!!!
?
KIND OF?

GET IN THE BACK.
A year ago, with my mom's influence
AH, DAD.
...
Since then we go out to eat together sometimes.
the real estate agency arranged a room for my dad at his budget.
After my parents got divorced,
at some point they got back in touch.
Now they're kind of like friends.
YUU-SUKE-KUN, WAS IT?
AH, YES.
YOU'RE A PRETTY FINE YOUNG MAN
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YOU WERE MADOKA'S CLASSMATE, RIGHT?
WHEN'S YOUR BIRTHDAY?
MY BIRTHDAY?
IT'S 20TH OF FEBRUARY
THAT MEANS YOU'RE THE "LEGS" CONSTELLATION
MADOKA IS THE "HORN" CONSTELLATION, SO...
IT'S A LONG DISTANCE, RISKY BUT FULFILLING RELATIONSHIP.
TN: He's talking about their compatibility based on Chinese fortune telling. He means their constellations are long distance, not their actual relationship.
UMM...
IT'S A RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT MANY GOOD POINTS
WHERE YOU WILL FIGHT A LOT AND BREAK UP EASILY.
DAD...!
...
WELL THERE ARE MANY HONEST PEOPLE WHO TREASURE THEIR FAMILIES
UNDER THE "LEGS" CONSTELLATION.
AH,
YUU-SUKE-KUN, DO YOU BELIEVE IN FORTUNE TELLING?
...NO, I DON'T REALLY...

AH, I SEE.
D. DAD,
ME AND YUUSUKE-KUN WILL BE OK!
I SEE.
AH. YEAH.
RIGHT?
WE ARE BOTH CONSI-DERATE OF EACH OTHER
WELL, TODAY SHOULD BE A DAY FOR CONGRATU-LATIONS.
.....
SO I'LL STOP WITH THE FORTUNE TELLING.
UM...
DAD...

?
EH... AH...
WELL... I'M HAPPY THAT YOU ASK, BUT...
IF YOU'D LIKE,
WON'T YOU COME TO OUR WEDDING CEREMONY?
WHEN I GOT DIVORCED, YOUR RELATIVES GOT INVOLVED AND I CAUSED EVERYONE TROUBLE.
IF I'M THERE, WON'T THE ATMOSPHERE GO BAD?
AND BESIDES, THEY AREN'T THE KIND OF PEOPLE TO BRING UP PROBLEMS FROM THE PAST...
MY FAMILY SAID IT'S OKAY FOR YOU TO COME,
IT'S FINE!

... BUT
I'M ASKING YOU AS WELL!
FOR MADOKA-SAN'S SAKE AND MINE,
...
PLEASE ATTEND OUR WEDDING CEREMONY.
THANK YOU...
THEN, SINCE YOU INSIST,
I THINK I'LL ATTEND.

THANK YOU,
DAD.
Just a few years ago, I wouldn't have thought
my dad would ever attend my wedding...
HAYASAKA, DIDN'T IT BOTHER YOU?
SORRY MY DAD SUDDENLY STARTED TALKING ABOUT FORTUNE TELLING.
IT'S FINE, IT DIDN'T BOTHER ME.
REALLY?
YEAH.

RATHER THAN THAT,
I THOUGHT THAT HE'S AN INTERESTING GUY.
I LIKE YOUR DAD A LOT.
Hm,
SORT OF...
I WAS THINKING OF ASKING MY DAD TO BE MY ESCORT
DURING THE RECEPTION WHEN I'M WEARING THE RE-DYED DRESS, BUT WHAT DO YOU THINK?
OF COURSE WHEN I ENTER THE CHURCH
I'M PLANNING TO WALK WITH MY MOM, BUT...

THANKS.
REALLY?!
ISN'T IT FINE?
YEAH.
I'M HAPPY YOU SAID SO.
WE HAVEN'T KEPT IN TOUCH FOR LONG, BUT HE IS MY DAD AFTER ALL.
BY THE WAY, DIDN'T YOU WANT TO ASK HIM?
HUH?
WHETHER OR NOT HE WAS THE PERSON YOU SAW
STANDING AT THE SCHOOL GATE WHEN YOU WERE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

IF I ASKED AND I WAS WRONG, IT'D BE EMBARRASSING.
SOMEHOW, IT'S SO LONG AGO THAT MY MEMORIES ARE KIND OF VAGUE...
AHH...
YEAH...
?
THAT'S RIGHT.
AH
YEAH, IF YOU SEND THEM,
I'M SURE MY DAD WILL BE REALLY HAPPY.
LAST TIME
HE SAID HE THINKS OF ME AS HIS DAUGHTER.
IT'S GOING TO BE FATHER'S DAY, SO CAN I SEND YOUR FATHER FLOWERS, YUUSUKE?
HEY—

MAY I HELP YOU?
EXCUSE ME.
I'D LIKE TO SEND SOME FLOWERS FOR FATHER'S DAY.
I SEE.
FOR FATHER'S DAY, YELLOW FLOWERS MIGHT BE POPULAR.
HOW ABOUT AN ARRANGEMENT OF SUNFLOWERS.
HAZY

HAZY
HAZY
THEN...
I'LL HAVE THE SUNFLOWER ARRANGEMENT.
TWO OF THEM
WILL YOU BE SENDING THOSE TO TWO SEPARATE ADDRESSES?
.....
YES.
In the 32 years
I've been alive,

TOWER RECORDS
MADO-CHAN!!
AUNT EIKO...
you working hard—?
TOWER RECORDS
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHAT HAPPENED.
I CAME TO BUY A CD.
WHAT HAPPENED?!
COMING ALL THE WAY HERE.
since I was born,
it's my first father's day present.

My aunt, a year older than my mother,
has been single until this age without ever marrying.
UMEDA IS A REAL CITY~
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I CAME, I FORGOT THE WAY.
WA HA HA HA
LET'S GO TALK ON THE OTHER SIDE.
AS EXPECTED OF OUR HOUSE'S AUDREY HEPBURN!
TOWER RECORDS
AUNT EIKO?
stare stare
WHEN YOU WEAR IT, IT SEEMS LIKE SUCH A HIGH-CLASS APRON!
IS THAT APRON FROM THE STORE?!
I like my aunt's lively personality,
but sometimes when she doesn't read the atmosphere it's kind of troublesome.
ufu fu fu
SHHHH—
YOU'RE TOO LOUD!!

START ME UP!!
IT'LL BE BAD IF I CAUSE A DISTURBANCE TO YOUR WORK.
SO I'LL BE ON MY WAY.
AH... YEAH.
because she doesn't have her own children.
Eri and me
She always fawns over
AH, THAT'S RIGHT!
HUH?
MADO-CHAN,
TOWER RECORDS
I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD
TO SEEING YOU
IN YOUR WEDDING DRESS.

My aunt...
AH, MADOKA.
THE FLOWERS ARRIVED A LITTLE WHILE AGO.
when Dad asked her to marry him
I wonder what she was thinking...

IT SHOULD BE RIGHT ON YOUR WAY HOME FROM UMEDA.
NEXT TIME, MAYBE ON YOUR WAY HOME FROM WORK.
WON'T YOU COME BY MY OFFICE?
IF YOU'D LIKE,
SORRY FOR SENDING THEM SO SUDDENLY.
I DIDN'T ASK WHETHER YOU WERE ALL RIGHT WITH IT...
No no I'm happy
Thanks
I'LL STOP BY SOMETIME SOON.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
I'll be waiting
Yeah, please do
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
Hm? What is it?
UM... DAD.
.....

Sure it's fine.
What is it?
EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE DATING MY MOM,
WHY DID YOU ASK TO MARRY AUNT EIKO?
SINCE I HEARD ABOUT IT FROM MOM
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN WONDERING...

Your mom
was special to me.
...BUT
AS I CAME TO KNOW HOW EIKO WAS SO INNOCENT AND STRAIGHT-FORWARD,
I WAS CHARMED BY HER.
If it's this person,
no matter what kind of troubles we face
we can laugh and over-come them together.
I had that kind of feeling.

clank
clunk
"Actually 3 years ago"
"Eiko-san came to my office by chance."
"Aunt Eiko went, alone...?"
"Yes."
CLANK
CLUNK
...
"It seemed like she happened to pass nearby and remembered..."
"When I saw her smiling face full of happiness"
"I thought that I'm glad she didn't end up together with me."

to seeing you in your wedding dress."
"I'm really looking forward
I think the reason Aunt Eiko
gave up on dad...
.....must have been because she loved him...
...
CLANK
CLUNK
Chapter 5 - End

CH6

RATTLE
TOKITOU.
YES.
How old is your father ?
English
OR IF YOU WANT "ANATA NO OTOUSAN HA NAN SAI DESU KA?"
.....

UM...
UM...
WHAT? CAN'T YOU ANSWER THAT?
IT SHOULD BE THE SAME THING YOU JUST DID.
UNTIL YOU CAN ANSWER,
YOU'LL STAND THERE.

But,

most of my friends knew that I live in a fatherless home.

Giving the age of a father that doesn't live with us seems fake.

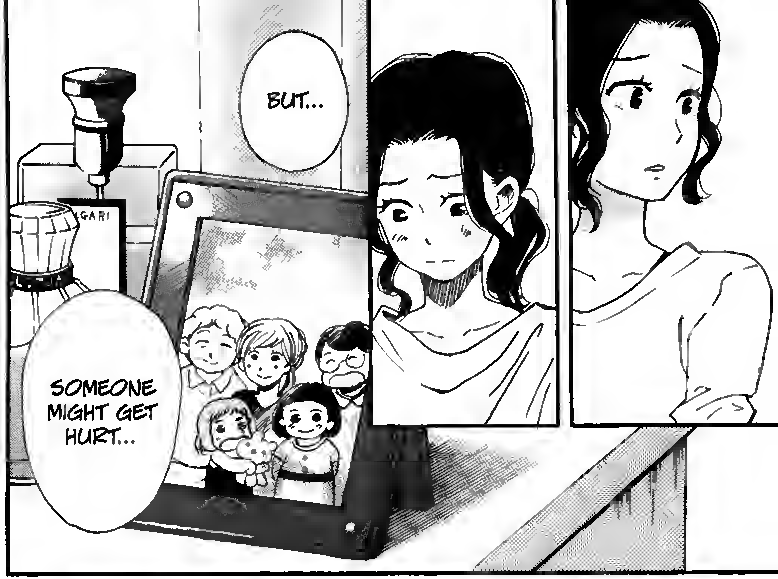
In the end, I couldn't say anything.

I could have easily answered the question.

YOUR FATHER'S AGE?
WOULDN'T PUTTING THE SAME AS YOUR MOTHER'S BE OK?
.....
?
FATHER WAS INVITED TO THE WEDDING BUT...
MAYBE I SAID TOO MUCH...

IT'S IN THE PAST...
EVERYONE KNEW ABOUT MY FATHER,
... BUT EVERYONE STILL...
IT STILL STICKS IN THEIR HEART.
I CAN SAY I HAVE A FATHER WITH PRIDE.
LOOK! LOOK!
HEY!
WEREN'T BOTH YUU-SUKE'S PAR-ENTS THERE TOO?
PO-
MADOKA...
.. OH, SORRY..

WHY
IS IT SO WRONG TO WANT TO BE PROUD?
EVEN IF YOU DON'T LIVE TOGETHER
ISN'T IT NATURAL TO WANT YOUR FATHER TO COME TO THE WEDDING?


BUT...
SOMEONE MIGHT GET HURT...

DRIP

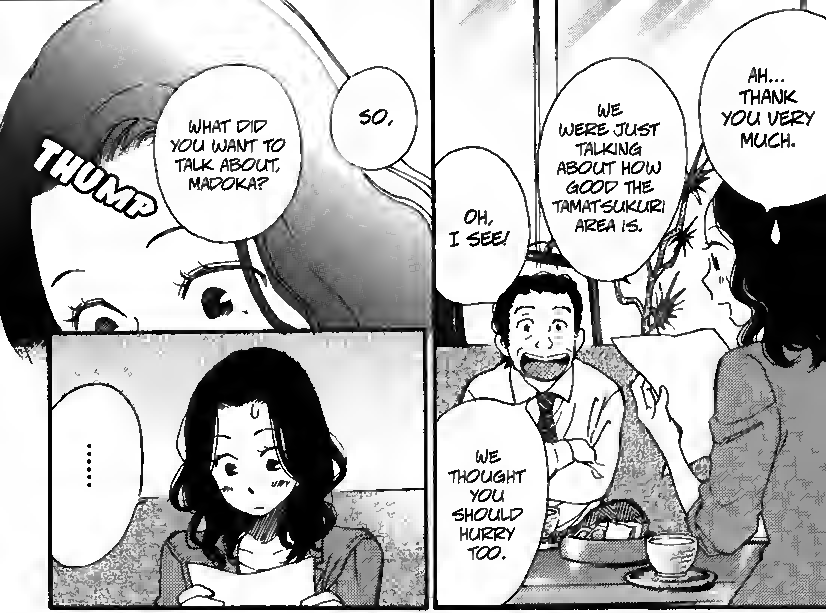
EVERYONE
MIGHT GET HURT...
In reality,
there aren't any bad people.
DADDY, BUY THIS!

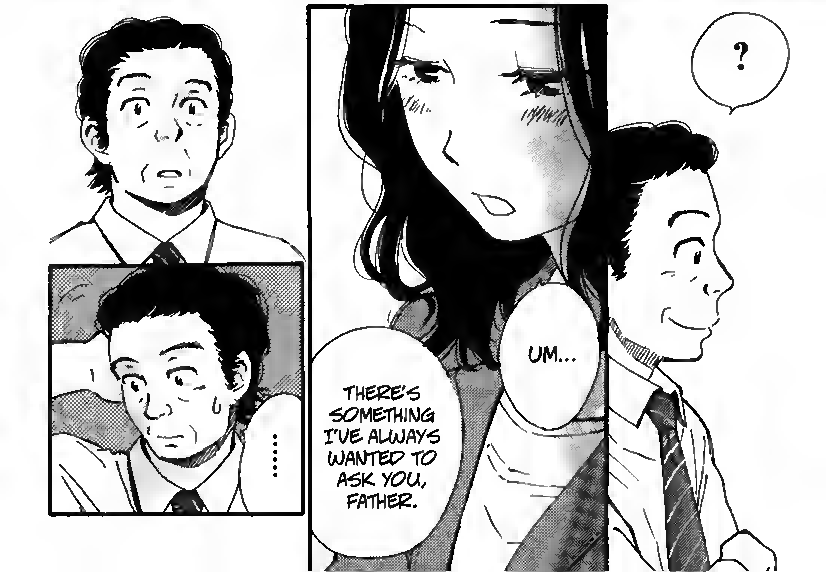
their feelings for each other change little by little.
It's just that
Yay!
Yay!
.....
in my daydreams repeatedly.
Those kinds of thoughts from my childhood sometimes pop up
"If Mama and Father hadn't gotten married..."

Umehara Construction Boardroom
There isn't anything like
"What if"
CLINK
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR WEDDING.
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER.
UM... SORRY.
TAKAI-SAN WHO USED TO WORK FOR US AT HOME?"
MADOKA, DO YOU REMEMBER?
AH...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YOU USED TO PLAY WITH TAKAI-SAN OFTEN.
MAN-AGER~
IF SHE DOESN'T REMEM-BER, DON'T FORCE HER.
Sorry
HAHA
SHE WAS STILL SO VERY SMALL BACK THEN.
SHE TURNED INTO SUCH A FINE LADY...
IT'S SO DEEPLY MOVING.
KACHA
PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
CLOSE.
IT SEEMS LIKE THIS OFFICE IS OLDER THAN I REMEM-BER.
LOOKS AROUND
FOR A MOMENT I ALMOST MISTOOK HER FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

IT'S BEEN ABOUT 10 YEARS SINCE IT'S BEEN REMODELED.
I SEE, YOU REMEMBER.
RIGHT, RIGHT.
I'M GIVING THIS TO YOU.
I REMEMBER,
YET I DON'T REMEMBER.
YUUSUKE AND MADOKA'S ACCUMULATED FORTUNE.
?
IF YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE IN THIS AREA, IT'S BEST TO LOOK AT IT NOW.


AH... THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT HOW GOOD THE TAMATSUKURI AREA IS.
OH, I SEE!
WE THOUGHT YOU SHOULD HURRY TOO.
SO,
WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT, MADOKA?
THUMP
.....


?
UM...
THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO ASK YOU, FATHER.
.....

I
WANT TO ASK ABOUT SOMETHING FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!
IS IT ABOUT MOTHER?
OR ABOUT AUNTIE..
WAIT NO...
Exhale—
Inhale—
FATHER, DID YOU
COME ALL THE WAY TO SCHOOL, WHEN I WAS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?!

BLANK...
AH...
NO...
IT COULD BE THAT I WAS JUST SEEING THINGS... I MEAN THE MEMORY IS JUST SO VAGUE.
UM THAT...
THAT TIME, I THOUGHT I SAW YOU STANDING BY THE SCHOOL GATE.
I'M SORRY...
IT WAS PROBABLY MY MISTAKE.
IT TAKES OVER AN HOUR
FROM FATHER'S HOUSE TO THE SCHOOL...
.....

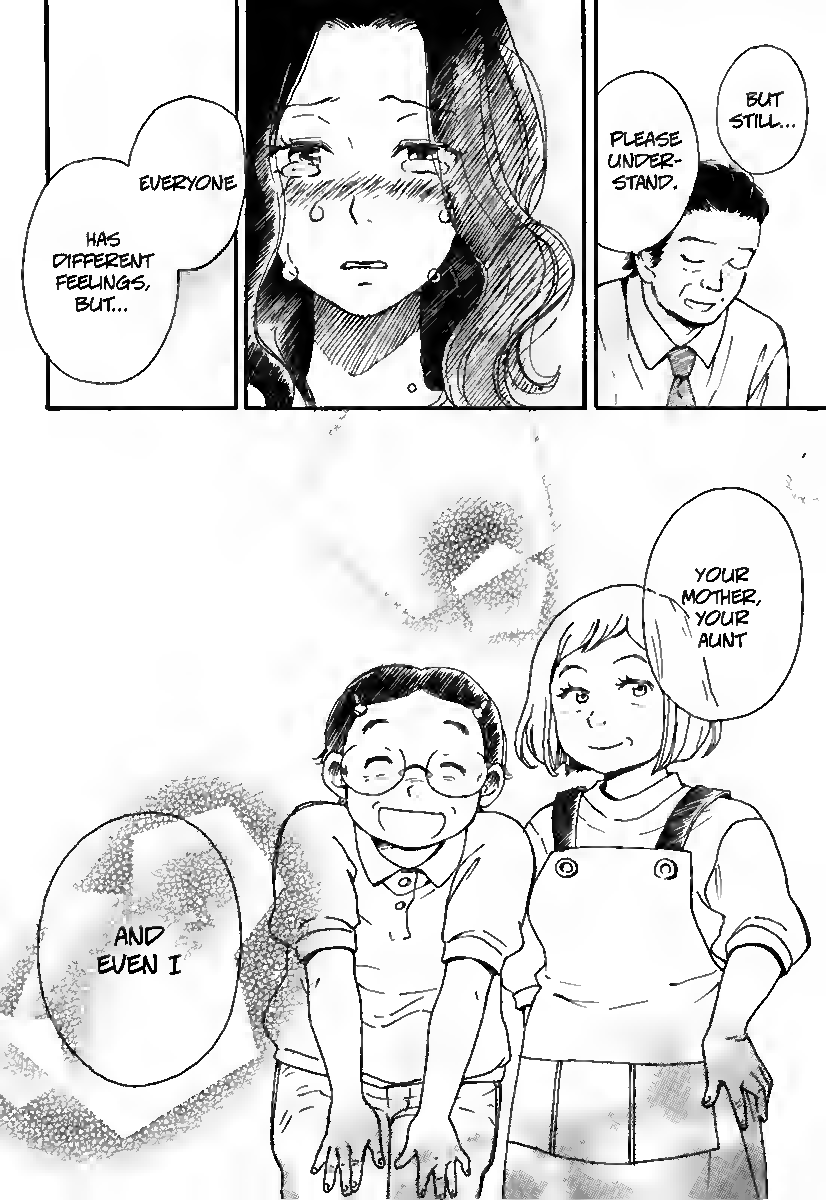
THAT, WAS ME.
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU AND ERI.
— I MEAN..
I COULDN'T FORGET...

SOMETIMES I WOULD SKIP WORK
AND COME TO SEE THE TWO OF YOU.
—WELL, IT'S JUST
ME, MY HOME LIFE AND SEX LIFE WEREN'T GOING WELL.
SO IT WAS THE LIGHT THAT SUPPORTED MY HEART.

I LET GO OF MY FAMILY...
INHERITED MY FATHER'S COMPANY
AND I FELT THAT EVERY DECISION I MADE WAS WRONG.
...I SEE.
SO YOU KNEW.
He probably held as many feelings as my mum and my aunt...

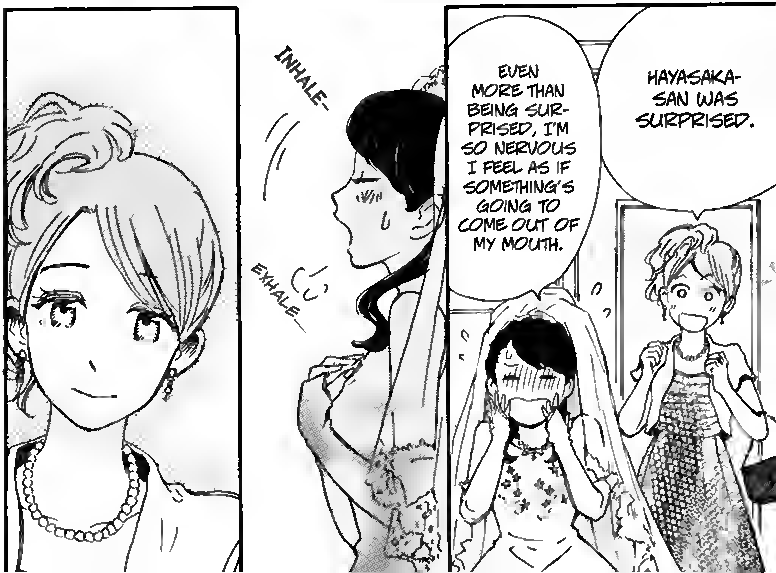
FATHER...
I'M SORRY...
I...
MOTHER, AUNTIE
AND FATHER...
I LOVE YOU ALL.

THEN, AFTER...
THE WEDDING...
.....
I'M SORRY I CAME ALL ON MY OWN AND ASKED SELFISHLY...
YEAH, I THINK THAT'S THE BEST.
I'M THE ONE THAT'S TRULY SORRY.
I DID
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING AS A FATHER...


EVERYONE HAS DIFFERENT FEELINGS, BUT...
PLEASE UNDER-STAND.
BUT STILL...
YOUR MOTHER, YOUR AUNT
AND EVEN I

EVERYONE WANTS YOU TO BE HAPPY
FROM THE BOTTOM OF THEIR HEART.

MADO-NEE
YOU'RE SO BEAU-TIFUL!
……


HAYASAKA-SAN WAS SURPRISED.
EVEN MORE THAN BEING SUR-PRISED, I'M SO NERVOUS I FEEL AS IF SOMETHING'S GOING TO COME OUT OF MY MOUTH.
INHALE-
EXHALE-

-I forgot when it was

that mother told me

YEAH.

that we didn't have a father.
"I'm both mother and father so I have to do my best."
I have such a reliable mother.

DING
DING
DONG
DONG

WELL THEN,
PREVIOUSLY HELP BY GOSHINKI MAPOKA-SAN,
THE BOUQUET THAT WAS IN THE CHAPEL
WE WANT TO PRESENT IT TO THAT PERSON BY ALL MEANS.
THE PERSON THAT WATCHED OVER MAPOKA-SAN FROM A YOUNG AGE, AUNT
TOKIMA EIKO-SAN
PLEASE ACCEPT
MAPOKA-SAN'S RELAY BOUQUET.

EIKO OBA-CHAN
WILL YOU TAKE IT?

It was a fine, but not so fine day.
WOULD YOU PLEASE ESCORT THE BRIDE OUT?
EIKO-SAN

We
will look
ahead
and keep
moving
forward.
CHAPTER 6 END

Soshite, Hare ni Naru

Tendo Kirin

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Hoi

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Mai

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